ECLECTIC ENGLISH CLASSICS

IVANHOE

A Romance

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

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SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

WITH AN OUTLINE FOR ITS STUDY

BY

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SCOTT'S IVAN.
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INTRODUCTION.

In presenting to the young student this English classic, it is the aim of the notes and the Introduction to suggest rather than to explain at great length. Historical details and minutiæ of manners and customs of the period are therefore outlined only, their amplification being left to the student.

Sir Walter Scott, the ninth child in a family of twelve, was born at Edinburgh, August 15, 1771. His father was Walter Scott, a writer to the signet, or solicitor, and akin to the border Scotts of Harden, a connection of the powerful house of Buccleuch. This connection of his father with the great house was a source of considerable pride to Scott: indeed, it was the aim of his life to be recognized among the landed gentry, and it was to the establishment of his family as such that he bent, later on, the full force of his literary energy. His mother was Anne Rutherford, daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, a medical professor in Edinburgh University. Scott was a delicate child, and when three years old was taken to Sandyknowe, his grandfather's farm. It was here, in his early youth, that he heard the traditions of that border war whose spirit he afterward infused so thoroughly into his poetry. Undoubtedly the influence of Sandyknowe was one of the strongest upon his mind. In 1779 he returned to Edinburgh, improved in health, but with a slight lameness in his step, the result of a fever. The lameness was incurable. After

a period at the high school, he entered the university in 1783; and at college, as at school, he was a prodigious reader of travels, romances, poetry, and old plays. The ballad literature and Percy's "Reliques" had an especial fascination for him. A marked trait that afterward showed itself conspicuously in his poems and novels was his susceptibility to the charms of natural scenery. In 1786 he entered his father's law office; and six years after, in July, 1792, he was called to the Scottish bar. In this year he began the study of German, and in 1796 published translations of Bürger's "Lenore" and "Wild Huntsman." In 1802 appeared the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border." The "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was brought out in 1805, and aroused widespread enthusiasm. The next year, through the Buccleuch, he received the appointment of a clerkship in the Scottish Court of Session, with a salary of £800, afterward £1,300. He then gave up his profession, and devoted himself to literature. In 1808 "Marmion" appeared; and in 1810, the picturesque "Lady of the Lake." The next year, 1811, he bought Abbotsford, in Roxburgh County, about twenty-eight miles southeast from Edinburgh, commanding a view of the Tweed and Melrose Abbey, and began the fulfillment of his long-cherished wish to found a family. It was the expense of Abbotsford that caused the financial difficulties that later came upon him. In June, 1814, "Waverley" appeared, and not only at once established its author as a novelist of extraordinary power in the delineation of character and the description of natural scenery, but revolutionized the English novel, lifting its tone, broadening its scope, making it artistic, in strong contrast to the droning sentimentality of Richardson and the coarseness of Fielding and Smollett, his predecessors. Moreover, besides raising the novel to a higher

plane, Scott infused into it a new element by weaving pleasing story about historical characters, thus creating the historical novel. The success of "Waverley" was encouraging, and novel after novel came from his pen with remarkable rapidity,—"Guy Mannering" (1815), "The Black Dwarf" and "Old Mortality" (1816), "Rob Roy" (1817), and "Ivanhoe" (1819). In 1820 the rank of baronet was conferred upon him, and his success seemed assured. But a storm was gathering, and six years later it burst. In January, 1826, came the failure of the publishing-house of the Ballantynes (of which he was a partner), and also of that of Constable & Co., with which it was connected. Scott's indebtedness was about £130,000, and, refusing all compromise, at the age of fifty-five he bravely sat down to write it off. He worked with an industry that was astounding. Novels, tales, histories, followed each other in rapid succession. The struggle was a grand one, and grandly did he accomplish it. Abbotsford was saved; but the strain had been too severe. In 1830–31 symptoms of paralysis appeared, followed by one stroke in February, and another in November. He went to Italy, October, 1831, but, his strength failing, came back to Abbotsford, June 11, 1832. He died there September 21, 1832.

The student is referred for further details to Lockhart's "Life of Scott," "English Men of Letters Series," W. H. Prescott's "Miscellanies," and Leslie Stephen's "Hours in a Library."

Of all Scott's novels, "Ivanhoe" is generally admitted to be the most popular. Its action is stirring, and the reader is led through the story by a change of incidents as varied as they are interesting. The name "Ivanhoe," as the author tells us, was chosen at random from some jingling rhymes that ran in his head,

recording the names of three manors forfeited by the ancestor of the celebrated Hampden for striking the Black Prince a blow with his racket in a quarrel at tennis. He took the name "Ivanhoe," because it had an ancient English sound, and a happy quality of giving no inkling of the nature of the story. The rhymes ran,—

> "Tring, Wing, and Ivanhoe
> For striking of a blow
> Hampden did forego,
> And glad he could escape so."

The elements of interest in the story are many, and chosen with the artistic grace that so characterized Scott. A pleasing chord is touched at the outset in the picture of contrast between the plain, blunt, homely Saxons and the fiery dash and valor of the Normans, with their high spirit of military glory and romantic chivalry. The one offsets and relieves the other. The period of the story is interesting also,— that momentous period in English history when new forces were uniting, out of which were to develop the Englishmen of Elizabeth's time and those of to-day. The exact time of the story is not at first quite clear. In the opening chapter the picture drawn by Gurth and Wamba has a closeness to the time of William the Conqueror; but, as the tale proceeds, the time is more that of Richard the Lion-hearted.

There is no more familiar figure in English history than Richard Cœur-de-Lion, third son of Henry II. and Eleanor of Aquitaine, and second king of the Plantagenet line (born, 1157; died, 1199). With his brothers Henry and Geoffrey, he revolted, when a boy, against his father, and, fleeing to France, was knighted by Louis VII. In 1183 Henry's sons were again embroiled with him. Henry died at Chinon, July 6, 1189, and Richard became king. After his coronation, Richard made a crusade with Philip Augus-

tus of France, and in the summer of 1190 Richard and Philip started out for the Holy Land. Quarrels destroyed the crusade, and Philip went home to seize Richard's continental domains. After a number of brilliant achievements, the King, enfeebled by fever, made a truce with Saladin (see Note 6, p. 45). Meanwhile England, during the absence of the King, was virtually ruled by the King's justiciars, the first of whom, William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, was faithful to Richard. He was, however, deposed; and John, the King's brother, was put at the head of the government. Information that his brother, with Philip of France, was plotting against him, made Richard give up his crusade, and turn his steps homeward. While passing through Austria he was seized by Duke Leopold, who had been aggrieved by Richard during the crusade, and shut up in a castle in the Tyrol. In the mean time, nothing being heard of him in England, John declared him dead, and claimed the throne. After a year's captivity, Richard was ransomed, February, 1194. When Philip heard that the ransom had been fixed, it is said he wrote to John, "Take care of yourself, for the Devil is let loose." This incident, with the arrival of the King in England in disguise, is dramatically though fictitiously brought in at the Ashby tournament.

Another salient feature of the story, and one that lends its measure of interest, is the introduction, amid the green glades of Sherwood Forest, of Robin Hood and his band of jolly outlaws, — Robin Hood, that famous English outlaw about whose actual existence there is such very slight evidence. Though unknown to actual history, his name rings through English balladry, and has become a household word wherever the English language is spoken. According to tradition, says Morley, the name "Robin Hood" was corrupted from that of Robert Fitzooth,

reputed Earl of Huntingdon, born about 1160, in the reign of Henry II. Robin Hood, having run through his inheritance, was outlawed for debt, and lived in the woods on the King's game. Boldly defiant, he became a type of the popular spirit of restless indignation against the Forest Laws, so severe under the Norman sovereigns. His chief haunts were Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, Barnsdale in Yorkshire, and Plompton Park in Cumberland; while his followers, or "merry men," as they are familiarly termed, were Little John, called so from his extraordinary stature (John Nailor, it is said); Scathlock, or Scarlet (William Scadlock); George à Green; Pinder of Wakefield; and Much, a miller's son. After a long woodland life filled with endless adventures, escapades, and bouts with friend and foe, Robin Hood went to his cousin, the prioress of Kirkless Nunnery in Yorkshire, to be bled. The prioress treacherously let him bleed to death. Even while dying, Robin, true to his character, so goes the story, sounded his horn faintly. Little John, hastening to his aid, sought leave to burn the nunnery, but Robin objected, and asked only to shoot from the window an arrow, and to be buried where it fell. Tradition has it that he was interred on an eminence overlooking the Calder, a longbow-shot from Kirkless (see Ritson's "Robin Hood," and the "British Ballads" by Professor Child).

The allusions to the Knights Templars are explained in the notes as they occur, but, should the student wish additional detail, he is referred to Addison's "Knights Templars." For further study of the manners and history of the period, aid will be found in J. R. Green's "Short History of the English People," H. A. Taine's "History of English Literature" (Chapter II.), and Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes."

IVANHOE.

CHAPTER I.

IN that pleasant district of merry England which is watered by the river Don,[1] there extended in ancient times a large forest, covering the greater part of the beautiful hills and valleys which lie between Sheffield and the pleasant town of Doncaster.[2] The remains of this extensive wood are still to be seen at the noble seats of Wentworth, of Wharncliffe Park, and around Rotherham. Here haunted of yore the fabulous Dragon of Wantley;[3] here were fought many of the most desperate battles during the civil Wars of the Roses;[4] and here also flourished in ancient times those bands of gallant outlaws whose deeds have been rendered so popular in English song.

Such being our chief scene, the date of our story refers to a

[1] A river of the West Riding of Yorkshire County, England.

[2] The termination "caster" is a remnant of the Latin *castra* ("a military camp"), and marks the traces of the early Roman occupation of the island. Other words of similar formation are "Lancaster" and "Winchester."

[3] Or Wharncliffe, the name of a lodge and wood in the parish of Penniston, Yorkshire. The dragon, a fabulous monster, was killed, so goes the legend, by More of More-Hall, who, clad in spiked armor, secreted himself in a well habituated by the dragon, kicked the monster in the mouth (its only vulnerable part), and so destroyed it.

[4] The intestine wars in England from the reign of Henry VI. to that of Henry VII., 1452–86. The name refers to the emblems or badges worn by the contesting parties; that of the House of York being a white rose, and that of the House of Lancaster a red rose.

period towards the end of the reign of Richard I., when his return from his long captivity had become an event rather wished than hoped for by his despairing subjects, who were in the mean time subjected to every species of subordinate oppression. The nobles, whose power had become exorbitant during the reign of Stephen,[1] and whom the prudence of Henry II.[2] had scarce reduced into some degree of subjection to the Crown, had now resumed their ancient license in its utmost extent; despising the feeble interference of the English Council of State, fortifying their castles, increasing the number of their dependants, reducing all around them to a state of vassalage,[3] and striving by every means in their power to place themselves each at the head of such forces as might enable him to make a figure in the national convulsions which appeared to be impending.

The situation of the inferior gentry, or franklins as they were called, who, by the law and spirit of the English constitution, were entitled to hold themselves independent of feudal tyranny,[4] became now unusually precarious. If, as was most generally the case, they placed themselves under the protection of any of the petty kings in their vicinity, accepted of feudal offices in his household, or bound themselves, by mutual treaties of alliance and protection, to support him in his enterprises, they might indeed purchase temporary repose; but it must be with the sacrifice of that independence which was so dear to every English bosom, and at the certain hazard of being involved as a party in whatever rash expedition the ambition of their protector might lead him to undertake. On the other hand, such and so multi-

[1] King of England, 1135–54; grandson of William the Conqueror.

[2] King of England, 1154–89; came to the throne at the age of twenty-one; first of the Plantagenet dynasty.

[3] In accordance with the feudal system (the land system brought in by the Normans with William the Conqueror), fiefs or land tenures were granted by a lord or baron to his man or vassal, the vassal swearing fealty and doing homage when his fief was conferred.

[4] Every estate, under the feudal system, was held by its tenant from the Crown, on condition of military service at the royal will.

plied were the means of vexation and oppression possessed by the great barons, that they never wanted the pretext, and seldom the will, to harass and pursue, even to the very edge of destruction, any of their less powerful neighbors, who attempted to separate themselves from their authority, and to trust for their protection during the dangers of the times to their own inoffensive conduct and to the laws of the land.

A circumstance which greatly tended to enhance the tyranny of the nobility and the sufferings of the inferior classes arose from the consequences of the Conquest by Duke William of Normandy.[1] Four generations had not sufficed to blend the hostile blood of the Normans and Anglo-Saxons, or to unite by common language and mutual interests two hostile races, one of which still felt the elation of triumph, while the other groaned under all the consequences of defeat. The power had been completely placed in the hands of the Norman nobility by the event of the battle of Hastings; and it had been used, as our histories assure us, with no moderate hand. The whole race of Saxon princes and nobles had been extirpated or disinherited, with few or no exceptions; nor were the numbers great who possessed land in the country of their fathers, even as proprietors of the second or of yet inferior classes. The royal policy had long been to weaken by every means, legal or illegal, the strength of a part of the population which was justly considered as nourishing the most inveterate antipathy to their victor. All the monarchs of the Norman race had shown the most marked predilection for their Norman subjects. The laws of the chase, and many others equally unknown to the milder and more free spirit of the Saxon constitution, had been fixed upon the necks of the subjugated inhabitants, to add weight, as it were, to the feudal chains with which they were loaded. At court, and in the castles of the great nobles, where

[1] More commonly known as William the Conqueror. He invaded England in 1066; met Harold, the English king, at Hastings, and totally defeated and killed him, thus gaining possession of the country, which he parceled out to his Norman followers in accordance with the feudal system.

the pomp and state of a court were emulated, Norman-French was the only language employed: in courts of law the pleadings and judgments were delivered in the same tongue. In short, French was the language of honor, of chivalry, and even of justice; while the far more manly and expressive Anglo-Saxon was abandoned to the use of rustics and hinds,[1] who knew no other. Still, however, the necessary intercourse between the lords of the soil and those oppressed inferior beings by whom that soil was cultivated occasioned the gradual formation of a dialect compounded betwixt the French and the Anglo-Saxon,[2] in which they could render themselves mutually intelligible to each other; and from this necessity arose by degrees the structure of our present English language, in which the speech of the victors and the vanquished have been so happily blended together, and which has since been so richly improved by importations from the classical languages, and from those spoken by the southern nations of Europe.

The sun was setting upon one of the rich, grassy glades of that forest which we have mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. Hundreds of broad-headed, short-stemmed, wide-branched oaks, which had witnessed perhaps the stately march of the Roman soldiery,[3] flung their gnarled arms over a thick carpet of the most delicious greensward. In some places they were intermingled with beeches, hollies, and copsewood of various descriptions, so closely as totally to intercept the level beams of the sinking sun; in others they receded from each other, forming those long sweep-

[1] Farm hands.

[2] The formation of this dialect, or "Old English" as it is frequently called in English literature, was a slow process of several centuries. Briefly, the chief marks of crystallization were the loss of inflections in the native tongue, and the introduction into it of a French vocabulary.

[3] Britain was first invaded by Romans under Cæsar in 55 B.C., and at the close of the first century they had subdued the native Britons as far as the Forth. Until the early part of the fifth century, when the Roman soldiery was withdrawn, the island was under Roman rule; the Romans building roads, fortifying towns, and establishing military posts throughout the country.

ing vistas in the intricacy of which the eye delights to lose itself, while the imagination considers them as the paths to yet wilder scenes of silvan solitude. Here the red rays of the sun shot a broken and discolored light that partially hung upon the shattered boughs and mossy trunks of the trees, and there they illuminated in brilliant patches the portions of turf to which they made their way. A considerable open space in the midst of this glade seemed formerly to have been dedicated to the rites of druidical superstition;[1] for on the summit of a hillock, so regular as to seem artificial, there still remained part of a circle of rough, unhewn stones of large dimensions. Seven stood upright: the rest had been dislodged from their places, probably by the zeal of some convert to Christianity, and lay, some prostrate near their former site, and others on the side of the hill. One large stone only had found its way to the bottom, and in stopping the course of a small brook, which glided smoothly round the foot of the eminence, gave by its opposition a feeble voice of murmur to the placid and elsewhere silent streamlet.

The human figures which completed this landscape were in number two, partaking, in their dress and appearance, of that wild and rustic character which belonged to the woodlands of the West Riding[2] of Yorkshire at that early period. The eldest of these men had a stern, savage, and wild aspect. His garment was of the simplest form imaginable, being a close jacket with sleeves, composed of the tanned skin of some animal, on which the hair had been originally left, but which had been worn off in so many places that it would have been difficult to distinguish, from the patches that remained, to what creature the fur had be-

[1] The Druids were priests of religion among the ancient Celts of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland; and their rites were held chiefly in oak groves; the oak, in their religion, typifying the Supreme God, and the mistletoe clinging upon it symbolizing man's dependence. The Druids had charge of matters of religion and morality, and exercised offices of a judicial character, practiced magic and divination, and sacrificed human beings in their worship.

[2] One of the three divisions of Yorkshire, embracing all the south and west parts of the county.

longed. This primeval vestment reached from the throat to the knees, and served at once all the usual purposes of body clothing. There was no wider opening at the collar than was necessary to admit the passage of the head, from which it may be inferred that it was put on by slipping it over the head and shoulders, in the manner of a modern shirt or ancient hauberk.[1] Sandals,[2] bound with thongs made of boar's hide, protected the feet; and a roll of thin leather was twined artificially around the legs, and, ascending above the calf, left the knees bare like those of a Scottish Highlander. To make the jacket sit yet more close to the body, it was gathered at the middle by a broad leathern belt secured by a brass buckle, to one side of which was attached a sort of scrip, and to the other a ram's horn, accoutered with a mouthpiece for the purpose of blowing. In the same belt was stuck one of those long, broad, sharp-pointed, and two-edged knives, with a buck's-horn handle, which were fabricated in the neighborhood, and bore even at this early period the name of a Sheffield whittle.

The man had no covering upon his head, which was only defended by his own thick hair, matted and twisted together, and scorched by the influence of the sun into a rusty dark-red color, forming a contrast with the overgrown beard upon his cheeks, which was rather of a yellow or amber hue. One part of his dress only remains, but it is too remarkable to be suppressed: it was a brass ring, resembling a dog's collar, but without any opening, and soldered fast around his neck, so loose as to form no impediment to his breathing, yet so tight as to be incapable of being removed, excepting by the use of the file. On this singular gorget was engraved in Saxon characters an inscription of the

[1] A tunic of ringed mail descending below the knees, with wide sleeves reaching a little below the elbow, being cut up before and behind a little way for convenience in riding. It was introduced in the twelfth century, and was supposed to have been invented in Germany.

[2] A protection for the feet, consisting of a sole, which was held in place by thongs bound round the instep and ankle.

following purport: "Gurth, the son of Beowulph, is the born thrall[1] of Cedric of Rotherwood."

Beside the swineherd, for such was Gurth's occupation, was seated, upon one of the fallen druidical monuments, a person about ten years younger in appearance, and whose dress, though resembling his companion's in form, was of better materials, and of a more fantastic appearance. His jacket had been stained of a bright-purple hue, upon which there had been some attempt to paint grotesque ornaments in different colors. To the jacket he added a short cloak, which scarcely reached halfway down his thigh. It was of crimson cloth, though a good deal soiled, lined with bright yellow; and as he could transfer it from one shoulder to the other, or at his pleasure draw it all around him, its width, contrasted with its want of longitude, formed a fantastic piece of drapery. He had thin silver bracelets upon his arms, and on his neck a collar of the same metal, bearing the inscription, "Wamba, the son of Witless, is the thrall of Cedric of Rotherwood." This personage had the same sort of sandals with his companion; but, instead of the roll of leather thong, his legs were cased in a sort of gaiters, of which one was red and the other yellow. He was provided also with a cap, having around it more than one bell, about the size of those attached to hawks,[2] which jingled as he turned his head to one side or other; and, as he seldom remained a minute in the same posture, the sound might be considered as incessant. Around the edge of this cap was a stiff bandeau of leather, cut at the top into open-work, resembling a coronet, while a prolonged bag arose from within it, and fell down on one shoulder like an old-fashioned night-cap, or a jelly-bag, or the head-gear of a modern hussar. It was to this part of the cap that the bells were attached; which circumstance, as well as the

[1] A slave; a serf. In early Britain the class of the thrall or *theow* was formed in two ways,—the captive taken in war, the freeman sentenced for certain crimes.

[2] Hawks were often trained to hunt game, especially other birds. This kind of hunting was called "hawking," or "falconry."

shape of his head-dress, and his own half-crazed, half-cunning expression of countenance, sufficiently pointed him out as belonging to the race of domestic clowns or jesters maintained in the houses of the wealthy to help away the tedium of those lingering hours which they were obliged to spend within doors. He bore, like his companion, a scrip attached to his belt, but had neither horn nor knife, being probably considered as belonging to a class whom it is esteemed dangerous to intrust with edge tools. In place of these he was equipped with a sort of sword of lath, resembling that with which Harlequin[1] operates his wonders upon the modern stage.

The outward appearance of these two men formed scarce a stronger contrast than their look and demeanor. That of the serf, or bondsman, was sad and sullen. His aspect was bent on the ground with an appearance of deep dejection, which might be almost construed into apathy, had not the fire which occasionally sparkled in his red eye manifested that there slumbered, under the appearance of sullen despondency, a sense of oppression and a disposition to resistance. The looks of Wamba, on the other hand, indicated, as usual with his class, a sort of vacant curiosity and fidgety impatience of any posture of repose, together with the utmost self-satisfaction respecting his own situation and the appearance which he made. The dialogue which they maintained between them was carried on in Anglo-Saxon,[2] which, as we said before, was universally spoken by the inferior classes, excepting the Norman soldiers and the immediate personal dependants of the great feudal nobles. But to give their conversation in the original would convey but little information to the modern reader, for whose benefit we beg to offer the following translation.

"The curse of St. Withold upon these infernal porkers!" said

[1] In British pantomime, the sprite invisible to every one except Columbine, his sweetheart. His office was to dance and frustrate the tricks of the clown, who also was supposed to be in love with Columbine.

[2] The language of Britain before the Conquest.

the swineherd, after blowing his horn obstreperously, to collect together the scattered herd of swine, which, answering his call with notes equally melodious, made, however, no haste to remove themselves from the luxurious banquet of beech-mast and acorns on which they had fattened, or to forsake the marshy banks of the rivulet, where several of them, half-plunged in mud, lay stretched at their ease, altogether regardless of the voice of their keeper. "The curse of St. Withold upon them and upon me!" said Gurth. "If the two-legged wolf snap not up some of them ere nightfall, I am no true man.—Here, Fangs, Fangs!" he ejaculated at the top of his voice to a ragged, wolfish-looking dog, a sort of lurcher, half mastiff, half greyhound, which ran limping about as if with the purpose of seconding his master in collecting the refractory grunters, but which in fact, from misapprehension of the swineherd's signals, ignorance of his own duty, or malice prepense, only drove them hither and thither, and increased the evil which he seemed to design to remedy. "A devil draw the teeth of him," said Gurth, "and the mother of mischief confound the Ranger of the forest, that cuts the foreclaws off our dogs, and makes them unfit for their trade![1]—Wamba, up and help me, an thou beest a man; take a turn around the back o' the hill to gain the wind on them; and when thou'st got the weather-gage,[2] thou mayst drive them before thee as gently as so many innocent lambs."

"Truly," said Wamba, without stirring from the spot, "I have consulted my legs upon this matter, and they are altogether of opinion that to carry my gay garments through these sloughs would be an act of unfriendship to my sovereign person and royal wardrobe: wherefore, Gurth, I advise thee to call off Fangs, and leave the herd to their destiny, which, whether they meet with

[1] Among the tyrannical Forest Laws of the Norman conquerors was one providing, under the penalty of a fine, for the *lawing* or mutilating shepherd dogs, so that they could not run after the deer. This was effected by cutting off the three claws of the right forefoot.

[2] Position of advantage.

bands of traveling soldiers, or of outlaws, or of wandering pilgrims,[1] can be little else than to be converted into Normans before morning, to thy no small ease and comfort."

"The swine turned Normans to my comfort!" quoth Gurth; "expound that to me, Wamba, for my brain is too dull and my mind too vexed to read riddles."

"Why, how call you those grunting brutes running about on their four legs?" demanded Wamba.

"Swine, fool, swine," said the herd; "every fool knows that."

"And swine is good Saxon," said the Jester; "but how call you the sow when she is flayed, and drawn and quartered, and hung up by the heels like a traitor?"

"Pork," answered the swineherd.

"I am very glad every fool knows that, too," said Wamba; "and pork, I think, is good Norman-French; and so when the brute lives, and is in the charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name, but becomes a Norman, and is called pork, when she is carried to the castle-hall to feast among the nobles. What dost thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha?"

"It is but too true doctrine, friend Wamba, however it got into thy fool's pate."

"Nay, I can tell you more," said Wamba in the same tone: "there is old Alderman Ox continues to hold his Saxon epithet while he is under the charge of serfs and bondsmen such as thou, but becomes Beef, a fiery French gallant, when he arrives before the worshipful jaws that are destined to consume him. Mynheer Calf, too, becomes Monsieur de Veau[2] in the like manner: he is Saxon when he requires tendance, and takes a Norman name when he becomes matter of enjoyment."

[1] Men who, as a religious duty, made a journey to a strange land or distant shrine, especially to Jerusalem.

[2] Veal; i.e., a French name for an English one. Wamba's meaning is, of course, an allusion to the effects of the Conquest, the Norman replacing the Saxon.

"By St. Dunstan,"[1] answered Gurth, "thou speakest but sad truths. Little is left to us but the air we breathe, and that appears to have been reserved with much hesitation, solely for the purpose of enabling us to endure the tasks they lay upon our shoulders. The finest and the fattest is for their board; the best and bravest supply their foreign masters with soldiers, and whiten distant lands with their bones, leaving few here who have either will or the power to protect the unfortunate Saxon. God's blessing on our master Cedric! He hath done the work of a man in standing in the gap. But Reginald Front-de-Bœuf is coming down to this country in person, and we shall soon see how little Cedric's trouble will avail him. Here, here!" he exclaimed again, raising his voice. "So ho! so ho! Well done, Fangs! thou hast them all before thee now, and bringst them on bravely, lad."

"Gurth," said the Jester, "I know thou thinkest me a fool, or thou wouldst not be so rash in putting thy head into my mouth. One word to Reginald Front-de-Bœuf or Philip de Malvoisin, that thou hast spoken treason against the Norman,—and thou art but a castaway swineherd,—thou wouldst waver on one of these trees as a terror to all evil speakers against dignities."

"Dog, thou wouldst not betray me," said Gurth, "after having led me on to speak so much at disadvantage?"

"Betray thee!" answered the Jester; "no, that were the trick of a wise man; a fool cannot half so well help himself—but soft, whom have we here?" he said, listening to the trampling of several horses which became then audible.

"Never mind whom," answered Gurth, who had now got his herd before him, and, with the aid of Fangs, was driving them down one of the long, dim vistas which we have endeavored to describe.

"Nay, but I must see the riders," answered Wamba; "per-

[1] Archbishop of Canterbury, 959. He was born in 924 at Glastonbury, was educated by Irish monks, made abbot of Glastonbury and treasurer of his kingdom by King Edmund, and in the reign of Edred (946–955) was almost absolute in national affairs. He died May 19, 988.

haps they are come from Fairy-land with a message from King Oberon."[1]

"A murrain take thee!" rejoined the swineherd. "Wilt thou talk of such things while a terrible storm of thunder and lightning is raging within a few miles of us? Hark, how the thunder rumbles! and for summer rain I never saw such broad downright flat drops fall out of the clouds; the oaks, too, notwithstanding the calm weather, sob and creak with their great boughs as if announcing a tempest. Thou canst play the rational[2] if thou wilt: credit me[3] for once, and let us home ere the storm begins to rage, for the night will be fearful."

Wamba seemed to feel the force of this appeal, and accompanied his companion, who began his journey after catching up a long quarter-staff[4] which lay upon the grass beside him. This second Eumæus[5] strode hastily down the forest glade, driving before him, with the assistance of Fangs, the whole herd of his inharmonious charge.

CHAPTER II.

NOTWITHSTANDING the occasional exhortation and chiding of his companion, the noise of the horsemen's feet continuing to approach, Wamba could not be prevented from lingering occasionally on the road, upon every pretense which occurred; now catching from the hazel a cluster of half-ripe nuts, and now

[1] King of the fairies. His wife was Titania.

[2] Cease being a fool.

[3] Believe me.

[4] A common old English weapon, usually a stout pole six feet and a half in length, used in defense and offense. The manner of using it was to place one hand on the middle, and the other equally between the end and the middle; and the left hand, shifting from one quarter of the staff to the other, gave the weapon a quick rotary motion, bringing the ends upon the adversary at unlooked-for points.

[5] The swineherd of Ulysses in Homer's Odyssey.

turning his head to leer after a cottage maiden who crossed their path. The horsemen, therefore, soon overtook them on the road.

Their numbers amounted to ten men, of whom the two who rode foremost seemed to be persons of considerable importance, and the others their attendants. It was not difficult to ascertain the condition and character of one of these personages. He was obviously an ecclesiastic of high rank. His dress was that of a Cistercian[1] monk, but composed of materials much finer than those which the rule of that order admitted. His mantle and hood were of the best Flanders cloth, and fell in ample and not ungraceful folds around a handsome though somewhat corpulent person. His countenance bore as little the marks of self-denial as his habit indicated contempt of worldly splendor. His features might have been called good, had there not lurked under the penthouse of his eye a sly epicurean[2] twinkle. In other respects his profession and situation had taught him a ready command over his countenance, which he could contract at pleasure into solemnity, although its natural expression was that of good-humored social indulgence. In defiance of conventual rules and the edicts of popes and councils, the sleeves of this dignitary were lined and turned up with rich furs, his mantle secured at the throat with a golden clasp, and the whole dress proper to his order as much refined upon and ornamented as that of a Quaker beauty of the present day, who, while she retains the garb and costume of her sect, continues to give to its simplicity, by the choice of materials and the mode of disposing them, a certain air of coquettish attraction savoring but too much of the vanities of the world.

This worthy churchman rode upon a well-fed ambling mule,

[1] One of the monastic order of the reformed and stricter branch of the Benedictines founded, 1098, by Robert, abbot of Molesme, at Citeaux (Cistercium), in Burgundy, France.

[2] Relating to the philosophy of Epicurus, who taught at Athens in the third century B.C. It advocated pleasure as the chief end of life.

whose furniture was highly decorated, and whose bridle, according to the fashion of the day, was ornamented with silver bells. In his seat he had nothing of the awkwardness of the convent, but displayed the easy and habitual grace of a well-trained horseman. Indeed, it seemed that so humble a conveyance as a mule, in however good case, and however well broken to a pleasant and accommodating amble, was only used by the gallant monk for traveling on the road. A lay brother,[1] one of those who followed in the train, had, for his use on other occasions, one of the most handsome Spanish jennets[2] ever bred in Andalusia,[3] which merchants used at that time to import, with great trouble and risk, for the use of persons of wealth and distinction. The saddle and housings[4] of this superb palfrey were covered by a long foot-cloth which reached nearly to the ground, and on which were richly embroidered miters,[5] crosses, and other ecclesiastical emblems. Another lay brother led a sumpter mule,[6] loaded probably with his superior's baggage; and two monks of his own order, of inferior station, rode together in the rear, laughing and conversing with each other, without taking much notice of the other members of the cavalcade.

The companion of the church dignitary was a man past forty, thin, strong, tall, and muscular,—an athletic figure, which long fatigue and constant exercise seemed to have left none of the softer part of the human form, having reduced the whole to brawn, bones, and sinews, which had sustained a thousand toils and were ready to dare a thousand more. His head was covered with a scarlet cap faced with fur; of that kind which the French call *mortier*, from its resemblance to the shape of an in-

[1] In convents, those under the three vows, but not in holy orders.

[2] A breed of small Spanish horses.

[3] In the south of Spain, one of the largest of its ancient divisions. The name was corrupted from Vandalusia, called so from the Vandals, who settled there in the fifth century.

[4] Trappings; the covering for a horse.

[5] A covering for the head worn by church dignitaries.

[6] A pack-mule used for carrying baggage.

verted mortar. His countenance was therefore fully displayed, and its expression was calculated to impress a degree of awe, if not of fear, upon strangers. High features, naturally strong and powerfully expressive, had been burnt almost into negro blackness by constant exposure to the tropical sun, and might in their ordinary state be said to slumber after the storm of passion had passed away; but the projection of the veins of the forehead, the readiness with which the upper lip and its thick black mustaches quivered upon the slightest emotion, plainly intimated that the tempest might be again and easily awakened. His keen, piercing, dark eyes told in every glance a history of difficulties subdued and dangers dared, and seemed to challenge opposition to his wishes for the pleasure of sweeping it from his road by a determined exertion of courage and of will. A deep scar on his brow gave additional sternness to his countenance and a sinister expression to one of his eyes, which had been slightly injured on the same occasion, and of which the vision, though perfect, was in a slight and partial degree distorted.

The upper dress of this personage resembled that of his companion in shape, being a long monastic mantle; but the color, being scarlet, showed that he did not belong to any of the four[1] regular orders of monks. On the right shoulder of the mantle there was cut, in white cloth, a cross of a peculiar form. This upper robe concealed what at first view seemed rather inconsistent with its form,—a shirt, namely, of linked mail,[2] with sleeves

[1] Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, and Carmelites. The religious orders, societies bound by rule of religion, were, briefly, monastic, military, and mendicant. The monastic were marked by the rule to which they clung, such as the Benedictines (following the rule of St. Benedict), the Basilians, and the Augustinians (the black monks of St. Augustine, established in the eleventh century, monastic and secular); the military were the Knights Hospitalers, the Knights Templars, and the Teutonic Knights; while the mendicant order embraced the Dominicans and the Franciscans. To this last may also be added the Augustinians and the Carmelites.

[2] Armor made of interlaced rings or chains of metal. The name is derived from the French word *maille*, also meaning the mesh of a net.

and gloves of the same, curiously plaited and interwoven, as flexible to the body as those which are now wrought in the stocking-loom out of less obdurate materials. The fore part of his thighs, where the folds of his mantle permitted them to be seen, were also covered with linked mail; the knees and feet were defended by splints, or thin plates of steel, ingeniously jointed upon each other; and mail hose reaching from the ankle to the knee effectually protected the legs, and completed the rider's defensive armor. In his girdle he wore a long and double-edged dagger, which was the only offensive weapon about his person.

He rode, not a mule, like his companion, but a strong hackney for the road, to save his gallant war-horse, which a squire led behind, fully accoutered for battle, with a chamfron, or plated headpiece, upon his head, having a short spike projecting from the front. On one side of the saddle hung a short battle-ax, richly inlaid with Damascene[1] carving; on the other, the rider's plumed headpiece and hood of mail, with a long two-handed sword, used by the chivalry of the period. A second squire held aloft his master's lance, from the extremity of which fluttered a small banderole or streamer, bearing a cross of the same form with that embroidered upon his cloak. He also carried his small triangular shield, broad enough at the top to protect the breast, and from thence diminishing to a point. It was covered with a scarlet cloth, which prevented the device from being seen.

These two squires were followed by two attendants, whose dark visages, white turbans, and the Oriental form of their garments, showed them to be natives of some distant Eastern country.[2] The whole appearance of this warrior and his retinue

[1] Pertaining to Damascus, famous for its skill in working steel.

[2] It is doubtful if the crusaders ever brought negro slaves home to England. In answer to this criticism, Scott says there is no proof that they never did so, and continues, "What can be more natural than that the Templars, who we know copied closely the luxuries of the Asiatic warriors with whom they fought, should use the service of the enslaved Africans, whom the fate of war transferred to new masters?"

was wild and outlandish. The dress of his squires was gorgeous; and his Eastern attendants wore silver collars round their throats, and bracelets of the same metal upon their swarthy arms and legs, of which the former were naked from the elbow, and the latter from mid-leg to ankle. Silk and embroidery distinguished their dresses, and marked the wealth and importance of their master; forming, at the same time, a striking contrast with the martial simplicity of his own attire. They were armed with crooked sabers, having the hilt and baldric[1] inlaid with gold, and matched with Turkish daggers of yet more costly workmanship. Each of them bore at his saddle-bow a bundle of darts or javelins, about four feet in length, having sharp steel heads,—a weapon much in use among the Saracens,[2] and of which the memory is yet preserved in the martial exercise called *El Jerrid*,[3] still practiced in the Eastern countries.

The steeds of these attendants were in appearance as foreign as their riders. They were of Saracen origin, and consequently of Arabian descent; and their fine slender limbs, small fetlocks, thin manes, and easy, springy motion, formed a marked contrast with the large-jointed heavy horses, of which the race was cultivated in Flanders[4] and in Normandy,[5] for mounting the men-at-arms of the period in all the panoply of plate and mail, and which, placed by the side of those Eastern coursers, might have passed for a personification of substance and of shadow.

The singular appearance of this cavalcade not only attracted the curiosity of Wamba, but excited even that of his less volatile companion. The monk he instantly knew to be the prior[6] of

[1] A band worn diagonally across the body, pendant on the shoulder; used to suspend a sword, dagger, or horn.

[2] Followers of Mohammed, and hostile to crusaders.

[3] A kind of sham fight, in which blunted javelins were used.

[4] A district of Europe, now included in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France.

[5] An ancient province of northern France.

[6] Presiding officer of a priory or religious house. Priories were of two kinds: in one the inmates chose the prior, who ruled as independently as an

Jorvaulx Abbey,[1] well known for many miles around as a lover of the chase, of the banquet, and, if fame did him not wrong, of other worldly pleasures still more inconsistent with his monastic vows.

Yet Prior Aymer maintained a fair character in the neighborhood of his abbey. His free and jovial temper rendered him a favorite among the nobility and principal gentry, to several of whom he was allied by birth, being of a distinguished Norman family. The prior mingled in the sports of the field with more than due eagerness, — a circumstance which strongly recommended him to the youthful gentry. With the old he had another part to play, which he could sustain with great decorum. His knowledge of books, however superficial, was sufficient to impress upon their ignorance respect for his supposed learning; and the gravity of his deportment and language, with the high tone which he exerted in setting forth the authority of the Church and of the priesthood, impressed them no less with an opinion of his sanctity. Even the common people had commiseration with the follies of Prior Aymer. He was generous; and charity, as it is well known, covereth a multitude of sins. The revenues of the monastery, while they gave him the means of supplying his own very considerable expenses, afforded also those largesses which he bestowed among the peasantry, and with which he frequently relieved the distresses of the oppressed. If Prior Aymer rode hard in the chase or remained long at the banquet, men only shrugged up their shoulders, and reconciled themselves to his irregularities by recollecting that the same were practiced by many of his breth-

abbot; in the other the prior was established at the will of the abbot, the superior of the abbey to which the priory was subordinate. Prior Aymer seems to have been of the first class, as he is interchangeably called prior and abbot.

[1] This Cistercian abbey was in the valley of the river Jore, or Ure, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. It was erected in 1156, and destroyed in 1537. For nearly three centuries the ruins were left in a state approaching demolition; but at length they were traced out and cleared at the expense of Thomas Earl of Aylesbury, in 1807.

ren who had no redeeming qualities whatsoever to atone for them. Prior Aymer, therefore, and his character, were well known to our Saxon serfs, who made their rude obeisance, and received his "*benedicite, mez filz*," [1] in return.

But the singular appearance of his companion and his attendants arrested their attention and excited their wonder; and they could scarcely attend to the Prior of Jorvaulx' question, when he demanded if they knew of any place of harborage in the vicinity, so much were they surprised at the half monastic, half military, appearance of the swarthy stranger, and at the uncouth dress and arms of his Eastern attendants. It is probable, too, that the language in which the benediction was conferred, and the information asked, sounded ungracious, though not probably unintelligible, in the ears of the Saxon peasants.

"I asked you, my children," said the prior, raising his voice, and using the *lingua Franca*, or mixed language, in which the Norman and Saxon races conversed with each other, "if there be in this neighborhood any good man who, for the love of God and devotion to Mother Church, will give two of her humblest servants, with their train, a night's hospitality and refreshment."

This he spoke with a tone of conscious importance, which formed a strong contrast to the modest terms which he thought it proper to employ.

"Two of the humblest servants of Mother Church!" repeated Wamba to himself, but, fool as he was, taking care not to make his observation audible; "I should like to see her seneschals,[2] her chief butlers, and her other principal domestics."

After this internal commentary on the prior's speech, he raised his eyes and replied to the question which had been put.

"If the reverend fathers," he said, "loved good cheer and soft lodging, few miles of riding would carry them to the Priory of Brinxworth, where their quality could not but secure them the most honorable reception; or, if they preferred spending a penitential evening, they might turn down yonder wild glade, which

[1] "Bless you, my sons!" [2] Stewards.

would bring them to the hermitage of Copmanhurst, where a pious anchoret would make them sharers for the night of the shelter of his roof and the benefit of his prayers."

The prior shook his head at both proposals.

"Mine honest friend," said he, "if the jangling of thy bells had not dizzied thine understanding, thou mightest have known *Clericus clericum non decimat;* that is to say, we churchmen do not exhaust each other's hospitality, but rather require that of the laity, giving them thus an opportunity to serve God in honoring and relieving his appointed servants."

"It is true," replied Wamba, "that I, being but an ass, am nevertheless honored to bear the bells as well as your reverence's mule; notwithstanding, I did conceive that the charity of Mother Church and her servants might be said, with other charity, to begin at home."

"A truce to thine insolence, fellow," said the armed rider, breaking in on his prattle with a high and stern voice, "and tell us, if thou canst, the road to— How called you your franklin, Prior Aymer?"

"Cedric," answered the prior; "Cedric the Saxon. Tell me, good fellow, are we near his dwelling, and can you show us the road?"

"The road will be uneasy to find," answered Gurth, who broke silence for the first time, "and the family of Cedric retire early to rest."

"Tush, tell not me, fellow!" said the military rider; "'tis easy for them to arise and supply the wants of travelers such as we are, who will not stoop to beg the hospitality which we have a right to command."

"I know not," said Gurth sullenly, "if I should show the way to my master's house to those who demand as a right the shelter which most are fain to ask as a favor."

"Do you dispute with me, slave!" said the soldier; and, setting spurs to his horse, he caused him to make a demivolt across the path, raising at the same time the riding rod which he held

in his hand, with a purpose of chastising what he considered as the insolence of the peasant.

Gurth darted at him a savage and revengeful scowl, and with a fierce yet hesitating motion laid his hand on the haft of his knife; but the interference of Prior Aymer, who pushed his mule betwixt his companion and the swineherd, prevented the meditated violence.

"Nay, by St. Mary, brother Brian, you must not think you are now in Palestine, predominating over heathen Turks and infidel Saracens; we islanders love not blows, save those of Holy Church, who chasteneth whom she loveth.—Tell me, good fellow," said he to Wamba, and seconded his speech by a small piece of silver coin, "the way to Cedric the Saxon's; you cannot be ignorant of it, and it is your duty to direct the wanderer, even when his character is less sanctified than ours."

"In truth, venerable father," answered the Jester, "the Saracen head of your right reverend companion has frightened out of mine the way home—I am not sure I shall get there to-night myself."

"Tush!" said the abbot; "thou canst tell us if thou wilt. This reverend brother has been all his life engaged in fighting among the Saracens for the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher;[1] he is of the order of Knights Templars,[2] whom you may have heard of; he is half a monk, half a soldier."

[1] All Christendom at this period was on fire with a religious fervor which expressed itself in crusades, military expeditions to Palestine, to recover the Holy Land from the grasp of the Mohammedans. The Crusades became a feature of mediæval times.

[2] One of the religious military orders. Others were the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or the Knights of the Hospital, afterward known as the Knights of Rhodes and Knights of Malta; and the Teutonic Knights. The Knights of the Hospital (Knights Hospitalers) were founded 1092, and built a hospital at Jerusalem to provide for and protect pilgrims. The Teutonic Knights were the Knights of the Hospital of St. Mary in Jerusalem, and were founded by burghers of Lubeck and Bremen at the time of the siege of Acre, in the Third Crusade, 1189–91. The Knights Templars were founded in the

"If he is but half a monk," said the Jester, "he should not be wholly unreasonable with those whom he meets upon the road, even if they should be in no hurry to answer questions that no-way concern them."

"I forgive thy wit," replied the abbot, "on condition thou wilt show me the way to Cedric's mansion."

"Well, then," answered Wamba, "your reverences must hold on this path till you come to a sunken cross, of which scarce a cubit's length remains above ground; then take the path to the left, for there are four which meet at Sunken Cross; and I trust your reverences will obtain shelter before the storm comes on."

The abbot thanked his sage adviser; and the cavalcade, setting spurs to their horses, rode on as men do who wish to reach their inn before the bursting of a night-storm. As their horses' hoofs died away, Gurth said to his companion, "If they follow thy wise direction, the reverend fathers will hardly reach Rotherwood this night."

"No," said the Jester, grinning; "but they may reach Sheffield if they have good luck, and that is as fit a place for them. I am not so bad a woodsman as to show the dog where the deer lies, if I have no mind he should chase him."

"Thou art right," said Gurth. "It were ill that Aymer saw the Lady Rowena; and it were worse, it may be, for Cedric to quarrel, as is most likely he would, with this military monk. But, like good servants, let us hear and see, and say nothing."

We return to the riders, who had soon left the bondsmen far behind them, and who maintained the following conversation in the Norman-French language, usually employed by the superior classes, with the exception of the few who were still inclined to boast their Saxon descent.

"What mean these fellows by their capricious insolence?" said

twelfth century, for the protection of pilgrims to Palestine; their rules coincided in the main with the Benedictine order; they made the mosque of Omar their church, and called it the Temple of the Lord. In the fourteenth century the order was suppressed by Clement V.

the Templar to the Benedictine, "and why did you prevent me from chastising it?"

"Marry,[1] brother Brian," replied the prior, "touching the one of them, it were hard for me to render a reason for a fool speaking according to his folly; and the other churl[2] is of that savage, fierce, intractable race, some of whom, as I have often told you, are still to be found among the descendants of the conquered Saxons, and whose supreme pleasure it is to testify, by all means in their power, their aversion to their conquerors."

"I would soon have beat him into courtesy," observed Brian; "I am accustomed to deal with such spirits. Our Turkish captives are as fierce and intractable as Odin[3] himself could have been; yet two months in my household, under the management of my master of the slaves, has made them humble, submissive, serviceable, and observant of your will. Marry, sir, you must beware of the poison and the dagger; for they use either with free will when you give them the slightest opportunity."

"Ay, but," answered Prior Aymer, "every land has its own manners and fashions; and, besides that beating this fellow could procure us no information respecting the road to Cedric's house, it would have been sure to have established a quarrel betwixt you and him had we found our way thither. Remember what I told you: this wealthy franklin is proud, fierce, jealous, and irritable; a withstander of the nobility, and even of his neighbors Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Philip Malvoisin, who are no babes to strive with. He stands up so sternly for the privileges of his race, and is so proud of his uninterrupted descent from Hereward, a renowned champion of the Heptarchy,[4] that he is universally called

[1] Forsooth, indeed! — an expression of surprise or sudden feeling, said to come from the custom of invoking the name of the Virgin Mary in oaths.

[2] A man who held land from his lord, or worked on his estate,— one of the lowest class of freemen.

[3] In Scandinavian mythology, Odin or Woden was the supreme ruler of the universe.

[4] The seven independent Saxon kingdoms of England,— Kent, Sussex

Cedric the Saxon, and makes a boast of his belonging to a people from whom many others endeavor to hide their descent, lest they should encounter a share of the *væ victis*, or severities imposed upon the vanquished."

"Prior Aymer," said the Templar, "you are a man of gallantry, learned in the study of beauty, and as expert as a troubadour in all matters concerning the arrets of love; but I shall expect much beauty in this celebrated Rowena, to counterbalance the self-denial and forbearance which I must exert if I am to court the favor of such a seditious churl as you have described her father Cedric."

"Cedric is not her father," replied the prior, "and is but of remote relation. She is descended from higher blood than even he pretends to, and is but distantly connected with him by birth. Her guardian, however, he is, self-constituted as I believe; but his ward is as dear to him as if she were his own child. Of her beauty you shall soon be judge; and if the purity of her complexion and the majestic yet soft expression of a mild blue eye do not chase from your memory the black-tressed girls of Palestine, ay, or the houris[1] of old Mahound's[2] Paradise, I am an infidel and no true son of the Church."

"Should your boasted beauty," said the Templar, "be weighed in the balance and found wanting, you know our wager?"

"My gold collar," answered the prior, "against ten butts of Chian[3] wine. They are mine as securely as if they were already in the convent vaults, under the key of old Dennis the cellarer."

"And I am myself to be the judge," said the Templar, "and am only to be convicted on my own admission, that I have seen no maiden so beautiful since Pentecost was a twelvemonth. Ran

(South Saxons), Wessex (West Saxons), Essex (East Saxons), East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumberland.

[1] The Mohammedan name for nymphs of Paradise.

[2] Mohammed.

[3] A Greek wine.

it not so? Prior, your collar is in danger; I will wear it over my gorget in the lists[1] of Ashby-de-la-Zouche."[2]

"Win it fairly," said the prior, "and wear it as ye will. I will trust your giving true response, on your word as a knight and as a churchman. Yet, brother, take my advice, and file your tongue to a little more courtesy than your habits of predominating over infidel captives and Eastern bondsmen have accustomed you. Cedric the Saxon, if offended, — and he is noway slack in taking offense, — is a man who, without respect to your knighthood, my high office, or the sanctity of either, would clear his house of us, and send us to lodge with the larks, though the hour were midnight. And be careful how you look on Rowena, whom he cherishes with the most jealous care; an he take the least alarm in that quarter, we are but lost men. It is said he banished his only son from his family for lifting his eyes in the way of affection towards this beauty."

"Well, you have said enough," answered the Templar; "I will for a night put on the needful restraint, and deport me as meekly as a maiden; but as for the fear of his expelling us by violence, myself and squires, with Hamet and Abdalla, will warrant you against that disgrace. Doubt not that we shall be strong enough to make good our quarters."

"We must not let it come so far," answered the prior; "but here is the clown's sunken cross, and the night is so dark that we can hardly see which of the roads we are to follow. He bid us turn, I think, to the left."

"To the right," said Brian, "to the best of my remembrance."

"To the left, certainly, the left; I remember his pointing with his wooden sword."

"Ay, but he held his sword in his left hand, and so pointed across his body with it," said the Templar.

Each maintained his opinion with sufficient obstinacy, as is usual in all such cases. The attendants were appealed to, but they had not been near enough to hear Wamba's directions. At

[1] The field of combat. [2] A town in Leicester County, England.

length Brian remarked, what had at first escaped him in the twilight, "Here is some one either asleep or lying dead at the foot of this cross. Hugo, stir him with the butt end of thy lance."

This was no sooner done than the figure arose, exclaiming in good French, "Whosoever thou art, it is discourteous in you to disturb my thoughts."

"We did but wish to ask you," said the prior, "the road to Rotherwood, the abode of Cedric the Saxon."

"I myself am bound thither," replied the stranger; "and if I had a horse I would be your guide, for the way is somewhat intricate, though perfectly well known to me."

"Thou shalt have both thanks and reward, my friend," said the prior, "if thou wilt bring us to Cedric's in safety."

And he caused one of his attendants to mount his own led horse, and give that upon which he had hitherto ridden to the stranger, who was to serve for a guide.

Their conductor pursued an opposite road from that which Wamba had recommended for the purpose of misleading them. The path soon led deeper into the woodland, and crossed more than one brook, the approach to which was rendered perilous by the marshes through which it flowed; but the stranger seemed to know, as if by instinct, the soundest ground and the safest points of passage, and by dint of caution and attention brought the party safely into a wider avenue than any they had yet seen; and pointing to a large, low, irregular building at the upper extremity, he said to the prior, "Yonder is Rotherwood, the dwelling of Cedric the Saxon."

This was a joyful intimation to Aymer, whose nerves were none of the strongest, and who had suffered such agitation and alarm in the course of passing through the dangerous bogs, that he had not yet had the curiosity to ask his guide a single question. Finding himself now at his ease and near shelter, his curiosity began to awake, and he demanded of the guide who and what he was.

"A palmer[1] just returned from the Holy Land," was the answer.

"You had better have tarried there to fight for the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher," said the Templar.

"True, Reverend Sir Knight," answered the palmer, to whom the appearance of the Templar seemed perfectly familiar; "but when those who are under oath to recover the Holy City[2] are found traveling at such a distance from the scene of their duties, can you wonder that a peaceful peasant like me should decline the task which they have abandoned?"

The Templar would have made an angry reply, but was interrupted by the prior, who again expressed his astonishment that their guide, after such long absence, should be so perfectly acquainted with the passes of the forest.

"I was born a native of these parts," answered their guide; and as he made the reply they stood before the mansion of Cedric, — a low, irregular building, containing several courtyards or inclosures, extending over a considerable space of ground, and which, though its size argued the inhabitant to be a person of wealth, differed entirely from the tall, turreted, and castellated buildings in which the Norman nobility resided, and which had become the universal style of architecture throughout England.

Rotherwood was not, however, without defenses: no habitation, in that disturbed period, could have been so without the risk of being plundered and burned before the next morning. A deep fosse or ditch was drawn round the whole building, and filled with water from a neighboring stream. A double stockade, or palisade, composed of pointed beams, which the adjacent forest supplied, defended the outer and inner bank of the trench. There was an entrance from the west through the outer stockade, which communicated by a drawbridge with a similar opening in the interior defenses. Some precautions had been taken to place

[1] A wandering religious votary, especially one who bore a palm branch in token of his visit to the sacred places in the Holy Land.

[2] Jerusalem.

these entrances under the protection of projecting angles, by which they might be flanked in case of need by archers or slingers.

Before this entrance the Templar wound his horn loudly, for the rain which had long threatened began now to descend with great violence.

CHAPTER III.

IN a hall, the height of which was greatly disproportioned to its extreme length and width, a long oaken table, formed of planks rough-hewn from the forest, and which had scarcely received any polish, stood ready prepared for the evening meal of Cedric the Saxon. The roof, composed of beams and rafters, had nothing to divide the apartment from the sky excepting the planking and thatch. There was a huge fireplace at either end of the hall, but, as the chimneys were constructed in a very clumsy manner, at least as much of the smoke found its way into the apartment as escaped by the proper vent. The constant vapor which this occasioned had polished the rafters and beams of the low-browed hall by incrusting them with a black varnish of soot. On the sides of the apartment hung implements of war and of the chase, and there were at each corner folding-doors which gave access to other parts of the extensive building.

The other appointments of the mansion[1] partook of the rude simplicity of the Saxon period, which Cedric piqued himself upon maintaining. The floor was composed of earth mixed with lime, trodden into a hard substance, such as is often employed in flooring our modern barns. For about one quarter of the length of the apartment the floor was raised by a step; and this space, which was called the dais, was occupied only by the principal

[1] For a further exposition of the homes and the life of the Saxons, see Homes of Other Days, by T. Wright.

members of the family, and visitors of distinction. For this purpose a table richly covered with scarlet cloth was placed transversely across the platform, from the middle of which ran the longer and lower board, at which the domestics and inferior persons fed, down towards the bottom of the hall. The whole resembled the form of the letter T, or some of those ancient dinner-tables, which, arranged on the same principles, may be still seen in the antique colleges of Oxford or Cambridge. Massive chairs and settles of carved oak were placed upon the dais, and over these seats and the more elevated table was fastened a canopy of cloth, which served in some degree to protect the dignitaries who occupied that distinguished station from the weather, and especially from the rain, which in some places found its way through the ill-constructed roof.

The walls of this upper end of the hall, as far as the dais extended, were covered with hangings or curtains, and upon the floor there was a carpet, both of which were adorned with some attempts at tapestry, or embroidery, executed with brilliant or rather gaudy coloring. Over the lower range of table, the roof, as we have noticed, had no covering; the rough-plastered walls were left bare, and the rude earthen floor was uncarpeted; the board was uncovered by a cloth, and rude massive benches supplied the place of chairs.

In the center of the upper table were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family, who presided over the scene of hospitality, and from doing so derived their Saxon title of honor,[1] which signifies "the dividers of bread."

To each of these chairs was added a footstool, curiously carved and inlaid with ivory, which mark of distinction was peculiar to them. One of these seats was at present occupied by Cedric the

[1] Their Anglo-Saxon names were *hlaford* ("lord") and *hlaefdige* ("lady"). The author brings out the latent metaphor of the original words, showing that it was to the *hlaford* (*hlaf* in the Anglo-Saxon meaning "bread") that his dependants looked for their literal sustenance.

Saxon, who, though but in rank a thane,[1] or, as the Normans called him, a franklin, felt, at the delay of his evening meal, an irritable impatience which might have become an alderman, whether of ancient or of modern times.

It appeared, from the countenance of this proprietor, that he was of a frank but hasty and choleric temper. He was not above the middle stature, but broad-shouldered, long-armed, and powerfully made, like one accustomed to endure the fatigue of war or of the chase. His face was broad, with large blue eyes, open and frank features, fine teeth, and a well-formed head, altogether expressive of that sort of good-humor which often lodges with a sudden and hasty temper. Pride and jealousy there were in his eye, for his life had been spent in asserting rights which were constantly liable to invasion; and the prompt, fiery, and resolute disposition of the man had been kept constantly upon the alert by the circumstances of his situation. His long yellow hair was equally divided on the top of his head and upon his brow, and combed down on each side to the length of his shoulders: it had but little tendency to gray, although Cedric was approaching to his sixtieth year.

His dress was a tunic of forest green, furred at the throat and cuffs with what was called minever,— a kind of fur inferior in quality to ermine, and formed, it is believed, of the skin of the gray squirrel. This doublet hung unbuttoned over a close dress of scarlet, which sate tight to his body; he had breeches of the same, but they did not reach below the lower part of the thigh, leaving the knee exposed. His feet had sandals of the same fashion with the peasants, but of finer materials, and secured in the front with golden clasps. He had bracelets of gold upon his

[1] A military tenant and freeholder in the sovereign's service. A freeman not noble was raised to the rank of thane by obtaining five hides of land, making three sea voyages, or receiving holy orders. The thane had the right to vote in the Witenagemot of the shire and of the kingdom. After the Norman Conquest, barons and thanes were classed together. The title fell into disuse in the reign of Henry II.

arms, and a broad collar of the same precious metal around his neck. About his waist he wore a richly studded belt, in which was stuck a short, straight, two-edged sword, with a sharp point, so disposed as to hang almost perpendicularly by his side. Behind his seat was hung a scarlet cloth cloak lined with fur, and a cap of the same materials richly embroidered, which completed the dress of the opulent landholder when he chose to go forth. A short boar-spear, with a broad and bright steel head, also reclined against the back of his chair, which served him, when he walked abroad, for the purposes of a staff or of a weapon, as chance might require.

Several domestics, whose dress held various proportions betwixt the richness of their master's and the coarse and simple attire of Gurth the swineherd, watched the looks and waited the commands of the Saxon dignitary. Two or three servants of a superior order stood behind their master upon the dais: the rest occupied the lower part of the hall.[1] Other attendants there were of a different description,— two or three large and shaggy greyhounds, such as were then employed in hunting the stag and wolf; as many slowhounds[2] of a large, bony breed, with thick necks, large heads, and long ears; and one or two of the smaller dogs now called terriers, which waited with impatience the arrival of the supper, but, with the sagacious knowledge of physiognomy peculiar to their race, forbore to intrude upon the moody silence of their master, apprehensive probably of a small white truncheon[3] which lay by Cedric's trencher[4] for the purpose of repelling the advances of his four-legged dependants. One grisly old wolf-dog alone, with the liberty of an indulged favorite, had planted himself close by the chair of state, and occasionally ventured to solicit notice by putting his large, hairy head upon his master's knee, or pushing his nose into his hand. Even he

[1] The Anglo-Saxon hall recalls the *Megaron* of the Greek household.

[2] Sleuthhounds or bloodhounds.

[3] A *baton;* a short staff.

[4] A wooden plate or platter used for the table.

was repelled by the stern command, "Down, Balder,[1] down! I am not in the humor for foolery."

In fact, Cedric, as we have observed, was in no very placid state of mind. The Lady Rowena, who had been absent to attend an evening mass at a distant church, had but just returned, and was changing her garments, which had been wetted by the storm. There was as yet no tidings of Gurth and his charge, which should long since have been driven home from the forest; and such was the insecurity of the period as to render it probable that the delay might be explained by some depredation of the outlaws, with whom the adjacent forest abounded, or by the violence of some neighboring baron, whose consciousness of strength made him equally negligent of the laws of property. The matter was of consequence, for great part of the domestic wealth of the Saxon proprietors consisted in numerous herds of swine, especially in forest-land, where those animals easily found their food.

Besides these subjects of anxiety, the Saxon thane was impatient for the presence of his favorite clown Wamba, whose jests, such as they were, served for a sort of seasoning to his evening meal, and to the deep draughts of ale and wine with which he was in the habit of accompanying it. Add to all this, Cedric had fasted since noon, and his usual supper-hour was long past, — a cause of irritation common to country squires, both in ancient and modern times. His displeasure was expressed in broken sentences, partly muttered to himself, partly addressed to the domestics who stood around, and particularly to his cupbearer,[2] who offered him from time to time, as a sedative, a silver goblet filled with wine. "Why tarries the Lady Rowena?"

"She is but changing her headgear," replied a female attendant, with as much confidence as the favorite lady's-maid usually answers the master of a modern family. "You would not wish

[1] Cedric, it seems, had named his dog from the Scandinavian mythological god Balder, the god of light.

[2] An attendant at a feast.

her to sit down to the banquet in her hood and kirtle?[1] and no lady within the shire[2] can be quicker in arraying herself than my mistress."

This undeniable argument produced a sort of acquiescent umph! on the part of the Saxon, with the addition, "I wish her devotion may choose fair weather for the next visit to St. John's Kirk.[3] — But what in the name of ten devils," continued he, turning to the cupbearer, and raising his voice as if happy to have found a channel into which he might divert his indignation without fear or control — "what in the name of ten devils keeps Gurth so long afield? I suppose we shall have an evil account of the herd. He was wont to be a faithful and cautious drudge, and I had destined him for something better; perchance I might even have made him one of my warders."

Oswald the cupbearer modestly suggested that it was scarce an hour since the tolling of the curfew,[4] — an ill-chosen apology, since it turned upon a topic so harsh to Saxon ears.

"The foul fiend," exclaimed Cedric, "take the curfew-bell, and the tyrant by whom it was devised, and the heartless slave who names it with a Saxon tongue to a Saxon ear! The curfew," he added, pausing, "ay, the curfew, which compels true men to extinguish their lights, that thieves and robbers may work their deeds in darkness! Ay, the curfew — Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Philip de Malvoisin know the use of the curfew as well as William himself, or e'er a Norman adventurer that fought at Hastings. I shall hear, I guess, that my property has been swept off to save from starving the hungry banditti whom they cannot support but by theft and robbery. My faithful slave is murdered

[1] Gown; mantle.

[2] Originally, in the Anglo-Saxon, it was *scir*, meaning then, as now, a county, a province, a district.

[3] Church.

[4] One of the regulations introduced by William the Conqueror. At nightfall a bell was rung as a signal to put out the fires (curfew literally meant "cover the fire") and extinguish the lights.

and my goods are taken for a prey — and Wamba — where is Wamba? Said not some one he had gone forth with Gurth?"

Oswald replied in the affirmative.

"Ay! Why, this is better and better! He is carried off too, the Saxon fool, to serve the Norman lord. Fools are we all indeed that serve them, and fitter subjects for their scorn and laughter than if we were born with but half our wits. But I will be avenged," he added, starting from his chair in impatience at the supposed injury, and catching hold of his boar-spear. "I will go with my complaint to the great council. I have friends, I have followers. Man to man will I appeal the Norman to the lists. Let him come in his plate and his mail, and all that can render cowardice bold. I have sent such a javelin as this through a stronger fence than three of their war-shields. Haply they think me old; but they shall find, alone and childless as I am, the blood of Hereward is in the veins of Cedric. Ah, Wilfred, Wilfred!" he exclaimed in a lower tone, "couldst thou have ruled thine unreasonable passion, thy father had not been left in his age like the solitary oak that throws out its shattered and unprotected branches against the full sweep of the tempest." The reflection seemed to conjure into sadness his irritated feelings. Replacing his javelin, he resumed his seat, bent his looks downward, and appeared to be absorbed in melancholy reflection.

From his musing Cedric was suddenly awakened by the blast of a horn, which was replied to by the clamorous yells and barking of all the dogs in the hall, and some twenty or thirty which were quartered in other parts of the building. It cost some exercise of the white truncheon, well seconded by the exertions of the domestics, to silence this canine clamor.

"To the gate, knaves!" said the Saxon hastily, as soon as the tumult was so much appeased that the dependants could hear his voice. "See what tidings that horn tells us of, — to announce, I ween,[1] some hership[2] and robbery which has been done upon my lands."

[1] Think; imagine. [2] Pillage.

Returning in less than three minutes, a warder announced that the Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx, and the good knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, commander of the valiant and venerable order of Knights Templars, with a small retinue, requested hospitality and lodging for the night, being on their way to a tournament[1] which was to be held not far from Ashby-de-la-Zouche, on the second day from the present.

"Aymer, the Prior Aymer! Brian de Bois-Guilbert!" muttered Cedric. "Normans both; but, Norman or Saxon, the hospitality of Rotherwood must not be impeached. They are welcome, since they have chosen to halt: more welcome would they have been to have ridden farther on their way. But it were unworthy to murmur for a night's lodging and a night's food: in the quality of guests, at least, even Normans must suppress their insolence. — Go, Hundebert," he added, to a sort of major-domo[2] who stood behind him with a white wand; "take six of the attendants, and introduce the strangers to the guests' lodging. Look after their horses and mules, and see their train lack nothing. Let them have change of vestments if they require it, and fire, and water to wash, and wine and ale; and bid the cooks add what they hastily can to our evening meal; and let it be put on the board when those strangers are ready to share it. Say to them, Hundebert, that Cedric would himself bid them welcome, but he is under a vow never to step more than three steps from the dais of his own hall to meet any who shares not the blood of Saxon royalty. Begone! See them carefully tended; let them not say in their pride, the Saxon churl has shown at once his poverty and his avarice."

The major-domo departed, with several attendants, to execute his master's commands. "The Prior Aymer!" repeated Cedric, looking to Oswald; "the brother, if I mistake not, of Giles de Mauleverer, now lord of Middleham?"

[1] A passage-at-arms between armored knights in time of peace as an exercise of skill, usually accompanying some event of moment.

[2] Steward.

Oswald made a respectful sign of assent. "His brother sits in the seat, and usurps the patrimony, of a better race, — the race of Ulfgar of Middleham; but what Norman lord doth not the same? This prior is, they say, a free and jovial priest, who loves the wine-cup and the bugle-horn better than bell and book.[1] Good! Let him come, he shall be welcome. How named ye the Templar?"

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"Bois-Guilbert!" said Cedric, still in the musing, half-arguing tone which the habit of living among dependants had accustomed him to employ, and which resembled a man who talks to himself rather than to those around him; "Bois-Guilbert! that name has been spread wide both for good and evil. They say he is valiant as the bravest of his order, but stained with their usual vices, — pride, arrogance, and cruelty; a hard-hearted man, who knows neither fear of earth nor awe of heaven. So say the few warriors who have returned from Palestine. Well, it is but for one night: he shall be welcome too. — Oswald, broach the oldest wine-cask; place the best mead,[2] the mightiest ale, the richest morat,[3] the most sparkling cider, the most odoriferous pigments,[4] upon the board; fill the largest horns.[5] Templars and abbots love good wines and good measure. — Elgitha, let thy Lady Rowena know we shall not this night expect her in the hall, unless such be her especial pleasure."

"But it will be her especial pleasure," answered Elgitha with great readiness, "for she is ever desirous to hear the latest news from Palestine."

Cedric darted at the forward damsel a glance of hasty resent-

1 Attendance at church, and devotions at prayers.

2 A fermented beverage from honey and malt.

3 A drink made of honey flavored with the juice of mulberries.

4 A sweet and rich liquor, composed of wine highly spiced, and sweetened with honey.

5 The Saxons used horns for drinking-cups, sometimes made of glass or stone, but usually of horn. Many of curious form and shape have been found in excavated barrows or tombs of the dead.

ment; but Rowena, and whatever belonged to her, were privileged, and secure from his anger. He only replied, "Silence, maiden! Thy tongue outruns thy discretion. Say my message to thy mistress, and let her do her pleasure. Here, at least, the descendant of Alfred[1] still reigns a princess." Elgitha left the apartment.

"Palestine!" repeated the Saxon, "Palestine! How many ears are turned to the tales which dissolute crusaders or hypocritical pilgrims bring from that fatal land! I too might ask, I too might inquire, I too might listen with a beating heart to fables which the wily strollers devise to cheat us into hospitality. But no. The son who has disobeyed me is no longer mine; nor will I concern myself more for his fate than for that of the most worthless among the millions that ever shaped the cross on their shoulder, rushed into excess and blood-guiltiness, and called it an accomplishment of the will of God."

He knit his brows, and fixed his eyes for an instant on the ground. As he raised them, the folding-doors at the bottom of the hall were cast wide, and preceded by the major-domo with his wand, and four domestics bearing blazing torches, the guests of the evening entered the apartment.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Prior Aymer had taken the opportunity afforded him, of changing his riding-robe for one of yet more costly materials, over which he wore a cope[2] curiously embroidered. Besides the massive golden signet-ring, which marked his ecclesiastical dignity, his fingers, though contrary to the canon, were loaded with precious gems; his sandals were of the finest leather which was

[1] King of Britain, 872–901. He was the greatest of the Saxon monarchs, a wise ruler, and an appreciative promoter of learning.

[2] An ecclesiastical vestment very much like a cloak.

imported from Spain; his beard trimmed to as small dimensions as his order would possibly permit; and his shaven crown concealed by a scarlet cap richly embroidered.

The appearance of the Knight Templar was also changed; and, though less studiously bedecked with ornament, his dress was as rich and his appearance far more commanding than that of his companion. He had exchanged his shirt of mail for an under-tunic of dark purple silk, garnished with furs, over which flowed his long robe of spotless white in ample folds. The eight-pointed cross of his order was cut on the shoulder of his mantle in black velvet. The high cap no longer invested his brows, which were only shaded by short and thick curled hair of a raven blackness, corresponding to his unusually swart complexion. Nothing could be more gracefully majestic than his step and manner, had they not been marked by a predominant air of haughtiness, easily acquired by the exercise of unresisted authority.

These two dignified persons were followed by their respective attendants, and at a more humble distance by their guide, whose figure had nothing more remarkable than it derived from the usual weeds of a pilgrim. A cloak or mantle of coarse black serge enveloped his whole body. It was in shape something like the cloak of a modern hussar, having similar flaps for covering the arms, and was called a *Sclaveyn* or *Sclavonian*.[1] Coarse sandals bound with thongs on his bare feet, a broad and shadowy hat with cockle-shells[2] stitched on its brim, and a long staff shod with iron, to the upper end of which was attached a branch of palm, completed the palmer's attire. He followed modestly the last of the train which entered the hall, and, observing that the lower table scarce afforded room sufficient for the domestics of Cedric and the retinue of his guests, he withdrew to a settle placed beside and almost under one of the large chimneys, and seemed to employ himself in drying his garments, until the retreat of some one should make room at the board, or the

[1] Because worn by Sclavonians or Russians.

[2] Sea-shells worn by the pilgrims as emblems of a visit to the Holy Land.

hospitality of the steward should supply him with refreshments in the place he had chosen apart.

Cedric rose to receive his guests with an air of dignified hospitality, and descending from the dais, or elevated part of his hall, made three steps towards them, and then awaited their approach.

"I grieve," he said, "reverend prior, that my vow binds me to advance no farther upon this floor of my fathers, even to receive such guests as you and this valiant Knight of the Holy Temple; but my steward has expounded to you the cause of my seeming discourtesy. Let me also pray that you will excuse my speaking to you in my native language, and that you will reply in the same if your knowledge of it permits; if not, I sufficiently understand Norman to follow your meaning."

"Vows," said the abbot, "must be unloosed, worthy franklin, or permit me rather to say worthy thane, though the title is antiquated. Vows are the knots which tie us to Heaven,—they are the cords which bind the sacrifice to the horns of the altar,—and are therefore, as I said before, to be unloosened and discharged, unless our holy Mother Church shall pronounce the contrary. And respecting language, I willingly hold communication in that spoken by my respected grandmother, Hilda of Middleham, who died in odor of sanctity, little short, if we may presume to say so, of her glorious namesake the blessed St. Hilda[1] of Whitby, God be gracious to her soul!"

When the prior had ceased what he meant as a conciliatory harangue, his companion said briefly and emphatically, "I speak ever French, the language of King Richard and his nobles; but I understand English sufficiently to communicate with the natives of the country."

[1] A grandniece of Edwin, King of Northumbria (born 617, and died 680). In 650 she was abbess of Heortea ("Hartlepool"). She is best known in connection with the Abbey of Whitby, in Yorkshire, however, which she founded, and of which she was abbess. It was at this abbey the poet Cædmon sang.

Cedric darted at the speaker one of those hasty and impatient glances which comparisons between the two rival nations seldom failed to call forth; but, recollecting the duties of hospitality, he suppressed further show of resentment, and, motioning with his hand, caused his guests to assume two seats a little lower than his own, but placed close beside him, and gave a signal that the evening meal should be placed upon the board.

While the attendants hastened to obey Cedric's commands, his eye distinguished Gurth the swineherd, who, with his companion Wamba, had just entered the hall. "Send these loitering knaves up hither," said the Saxon impatiently. And when the culprits came before the dais, "How comes it, villains,[1] that you have loitered abroad so late as this? Hast thou brought home thy charge, sirrah[2] Gurth, or hast thou left them to robbers and marauders?"

"The herd is safe, so please ye," said Gurth.

"But it does not please me, thou knave,"[3] said Cedric, "that I should be made to suppose otherwise for two hours, and sit here devising vengeance against my neighbors for wrongs they have not done me. I tell thee, shackles and the prison-house shall punish the next offense of this kind."

Gurth, knowing his master's irritable temper, attempted no exculpation; but the Jester, who could presume upon Cedric's tolerance by virtue of his privileges as a fool, replied for them both: "In troth, uncle Cedric, you are neither wise nor reasonable to-night."

"How, sir?" said his master; "you shall to the porter's lodge,

[1] Originally "villeins;" in feudal times, persons, not free, of the lowest class in the social status. They were of two classes, — *regardant* (annexed to the soil as fixtures) and *in gross* (the personal property of their lord).

[2] A contemptuous (and sometimes jocular) expression for "fellow" or "sir."

[3] Originally a boy, a youth, the Anglo-Saxon name being *cnafa* ("a boy"); later, a rogue, a dishonest person.

[4] Another word for "master," frequently used by jesters in addressing their lords.

and taste of the discipline there, if you give your foolery such license."

"First let your wisdom tell me," said Wamba, "is it just and reasonable to punish one person for the fault of another?"

"Certainly not, fool," answered Cedric.

"Then why should you shackle poor Gurth, uncle, for the fault of his dog Fangs? for I dare be sworn we lost not a minute by the way when we had got our herd together, which Fangs did not manage until we heard the vesper-bell."

"Then hang up Fangs," said Cedric, turning hastily towards the swineherd, "if the fault is his, and get thee another dog."

"Under favor, uncle," said the Jester, "that were still somewhat on the bow-hand[1] of fair justice; for it was no fault of Fangs that he was lame and could not gather the herd, but the fault of those that struck off two of his foreclaws, — an operation for which, if the poor fellow had been consulted, he would scarce have given his voice."

"And who dared to lame an animal which belonged to my bondsman!"[2] said the Saxon, kindling in wrath.

"Marry, that did old Hubert," said Wamba, "Sir Philip de Malvoisin's keeper of the chase. He caught Fangs strolling in the forest, and said he chased the deer contrary to his master's right as warden[3] of the walk."

"The foul fiend take Malvoisin," answered the Saxon, "and his keeper both! I will teach them that the wood was disforested[4] in terms of the great Forest Charter. But enough of this. Go to, knave! Go to thy place! — And thou, Gurth, get thee another dog; and should the keeper dare to touch it, I will mar

[1] The hand that deals the penalty; in other words, austerity contrasted against clemency.

[2] Slave.

[3] Guardian.

[4] Thrown open. In 1215 the Great Charter disforested certain tracts of woodlands which the Norman kings had, in their passion for the chase, exclusively set aside as royal hunting-grounds. The author makes Cedric speak as if it had already transpired.

his archery. The curse of a coward on my head if I strike not off the forefinger of his right hand! He shall draw bowstring no more. —I crave your pardon, my worthy guests. I am beset here with neighbors that match your infidels, Sir Knight, in Holy Land. But your homely fare is before you: feed, and let welcome make amends for hard fare."

The feast, however, which was spread upon the board, needed no apologies from the lord of the mansion. Swine's flesh dressed in several modes appeared on the lower part of the board, as also that of fowls, deer, goats, and hares, and various kinds of fish, together with huge loaves and cakes of bread, and sundry confections made of fruits and honey. The smaller sorts of wild fowl, of which there was abundance, were not served up in platters, but brought in upon small wooden spits or broaches, and offered by the pages and domestics who bore them to each guest in succession, who cut from them such a portion as he pleased. Beside each person of rank was placed a goblet of silver: the lower board was accommodated with large drinking-horns.

When the repast was about to commence, the major-domo, or steward, suddenly raising his wand, said aloud, "Forbear! Place for the Lady Rowena." A side-door at the upper end of the hall now opened behind the banquet-table; and Rowena, followed by four female attendants, entered the apartment. Cedric, though surprised, and perhaps not altogether agreeably so, at his ward appearing in public on this occasion, hastened to meet her, and to conduct her with respectful ceremony to the elevated seat at his own right hand, appropriated to the lady of the mansion. All stood up to receive her; and, replying to their courtesy by a mute gesture of salutation, she moved gracefully forward to assume her place at the board. Ere she had time to do so, the Templar whispered to the prior, "I shall wear no collar of gold of yours at the tournament. The Chian wine is your own."

"Said I not so?" answered the prior. "But check your raptures: the franklin observes you."

Unheeding this remonstrance, and accustomed only to act upon the immediate impulse of his own wishes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert kept his eyes riveted on the Saxon beauty, more striking, perhaps, to his imagination because differing widely from those of the Eastern sultanas.

Formed in the best proportions of her sex, Rowena was tall in stature, yet not so much so as to attract observation on account of superior height. Her complexion was exquisitely fair, but the noble cast of her head and features prevented the insipidity which sometimes attaches to fair beauties. Her clear blue eye, which sate enshrined beneath a graceful eyebrow of brown sufficiently marked to give expression to the forehead, seemed capable to kindle as well as melt, to command as well as to beseech. If mildness were the more natural expression of such a combination of features, it was plain that in the present instance the exercise of habitual superiority, and the reception of general homage, had given to the Saxon lady a loftier character, which mingled with and qualified that bestowed by nature. Her profuse hair, of a color betwixt brown and flaxen, was arranged in a fanciful and graceful manner in numerous ringlets, to form which art had probably aided nature. These locks were braided with gems, and, being worn at full length, intimated the noble birth and free-born condition of the maiden. A golden chain, to which was attached a small reliquary of the same metal, hung round her neck. She wore bracelets on her arms, which were bare. Her dress was an under-gown and kirtle of pale sea-green silk, over which hung a long, loose robe which reached to the ground, having very wide sleeves, which came down, however, very little below the elbow. This robe was crimson, and manufactured out of the very finest wool. A veil of silk interwoven with gold was attached to the upper part of it, which could be, at the wearer's pleasure, either drawn over the face and bosom, after the Spanish fashion, or disposed as a sort of drapery round the shoulders.

When Rowena perceived the Knight Templar's eyes bent on

her, she drew with dignity the veil around her face, as an intimation that the determined freedom of his glance was disagreeable. Cedric saw the motion and its cause. "Sir Templar," said he, "the cheeks of our Saxon maidens have seen too little of the sun to enable them to bear the fixed glance of a crusader."

"If I have offended," replied Sir Brian, "I crave your pardon, — that is, I crave the Lady Rowena's pardon, — for my humility will carry me no lower."

"The Lady Rowena," said the prior, "has punished us all in chastising the boldness of my friend. Let me hope she will be less cruel to the splendid train which are to meet at the tournament."

"Our going thither," said Cedric, "is uncertain. I love not these vanities, which were unknown to my fathers when England was free."

"Let us hope, nevertheless," said the prior, "our company may determine you to travel thitherward. When the roads are so unsafe, the escort of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is not to be despised."

"Sir Prior," answered the Saxon, "wheresoever I have traveled in this land, I have hitherto found myself, with the assistance of my good sword and faithful followers, in no respect needful of other aid. At present, if we indeed journey to Ashby-de-la-Zouche, we do so with my noble neighbor and countryman Athelstane of Coningsburgh,[1] and with such a train as would set outlaws and feudal enemies at defiance. I drink to you, Sir Prior, in this cup of wine, which I trust your taste will approve, and I thank you for your courtesy. Should you be so rigid in adhering to monastic rule," he added, "as to prefer your acid preparation of milk, I hope you will not strain courtesy to do me reason."

"Nay," said the priest, laughing, "it is only in our abbey that

[1] In the West Riding of Yorkshire, England, near the river Don (see note, p. 5).

we confine ourselves to the *lac dulce*[1] or the *lac acidum*[2] either. Conversing with the world, we use the world's fashions; and therefore I answer your pledge in this honest wine, and leave the weaker liquor to my lay-brother."

"And I," said the Templar, filling his goblet, "drink wassail[3] to the fair Rowena; for since her namesake[4] introduced the word into England, has never been one more worthy of such a tribute. By my faith, I could pardon the unhappy Vortigern,[5] had he half the cause that we now witness for making shipwreck of his kingdom."

"I will spare your courtesy, Sir Knight," said Rowena with dignity, and without unveiling herself; "or, rather, I will tax it so far as to require of you the latest news from Palestine, — a theme more agreeable to our English ears than the compliments which your French breeding teaches."

"I have little of importance to say, lady," answered Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "excepting the confirmed tidings of a truce with Saladin."[6]

[1] Sweet milk.

[2] Sour milk.

[3] The Saxon formula in pledging toasts, from the Anglo-Saxon *waesan* ("to be") and *hael* ("health"); the Saxon form of saying, "I drink your health."

[4] In the legendary history of Britain, Rowena figures as the daughter of Hengist, and later as the wife of Vortigern.

[5] Or Gwrtheryn, a prince of one of the native British tribes (the Demetæ, it is thought), who, according to ancient tradition, in the middle of the fifth century called upon the two Jutish chiefs Hengist and Horsa, to aid him against the Picts, whose fierce inroads constantly annoyed the Britons.

[6] Salah-ed-Din Yussuf, a celebrated Sultan of Egypt, known especially in connection with his wars with the crusaders. He attacked Palestine 1186; routed the Christians completely at Tiberias, or Hitten, July 4, 1187; and took Jerusalem Oct. 2. His triumphant progress was checked by the armies of the Third Crusade, led by Richard I. of England and Philip Augustus of France, who took Acre in July, 1191, after a two-years' siege. A truce of three years was concluded in 1192, and the coast of Palestine from Tyre to Joppa was granted to the Christians. Soon after, Richard returned to Europe, and Saladin expired at Damascus March 4, 1193.

He was interrupted by Wamba, who had taken his appropriated seat upon a chair the back of which was decorated with two ass's ears, and which was placed about two steps behind that of his master, who from time to time supplied him with victuals from his own trencher, — a favor, however, which the Jester shared with the favorite dogs, of whom, as we have already noticed, there were several in attendance. Here sat Wamba, with a small table before him, his heels tucked up against the bar of the chair, his cheeks sucked up so as to make his jaws resemble a pair of nut-crackers, and his eyes half shut, yet watching with alertness every opportunity to exercise his licensed foolery.

"These truces with the infidels," he exclaimed, without caring how suddenly he interrupted the stately Templar, "make an old man of me."

"Go to, knave! How so?" said Cedric, his features prepared to receive favorably the expected jest.

"Because," answered Wamba, "I remember three of them in my day, each of which was to endure for the course of fifty years; so that, by computation, I must be at least a hundred and fifty years old."

"I will warrant you against dying of old age, however," said the Templar, who now recognized his friend of the forest. "I will assure you from all deaths but a violent one if you give such directions to wayfarers as you did this night to the prior and me."

"How, sirrah!" said Cedric, "misdirect travelers? We must have you whipped. You are at least as much rogue as fool."

"I pray thee, uncle," answered the Jester, "let my folly for once protect my roguery. I did but make a mistake between my right hand and my left; and he might have pardoned a greater who took a fool for his counselor and guide."

Conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the porter's page, who announced that there was a stranger at the gate, imploring admittance and hospitality.

"Admit him," said Cedric, "be he who or what he may. A night like that which roars without compels even wild animals to

herd with tame, and to seek the protection of man, their mortal foe, rather than perish by the elements. Let his wants be ministered to with all care. — Look to it, Oswald."

And the steward left the banqueting-hall to see the commands of his patron obeyed.

CHAPTER V.

OSWALD, returning, whispered into the ear of his master, "It is a Jew, who calls himself Isaac of York.[1] Is it fit I should marshal him into the hall?"

"Let Gurth do thine office, Oswald," said Wamba with his usual effrontery; "the swineherd will be a fit usher to the Jew."

"St. Mary!" said the abbot, crossing himself, "an unbelieving Jew, and admitted into this presence!"

"A dog Jew," echoed the Templar, "to approach a defender of the Holy Sepulcher!"

"By my faith," said Wamba, "it would seem the Templars love the Jews' inheritance better than they do their company."

"Peace, my worthy guests," said Cedric; "my hospitality must not be bounded by your dislikes. If Heaven bore with the whole nation of stiff-necked unbelievers for more years than a layman can number, we may endure the presence of one Jew for a few hours. But I constrain no man to converse or to feed with him. Let him have a board and a morsel apart — unless," he said, smiling, "these turbaned strangers will admit his society."

"Sir Franklin," answered the Templar, "my Saracen slaves are true Moslems,[2] and scorn as much as any Christian to hold intercourse with a Jew."

"Now, in faith," said Wamba, "I cannot see that the wor-

[1] The capital of Yorkshire County, England, situated on the river Ouse at its junction with the Foss. Under the Heptarchy, the city was the capital of Northumbria.

[2] Followers of Mohammed.

shipers of Mahound and Termagaunt[1] have so greatly the advantage over the people once chosen of Heaven."

"He shall sit with thee, Wamba," said Cedric. "The fool and the knave will be well met."

"The fool," answered Wamba, raising the relics of a gammon[2] of bacon, "will take care to erect a bulwark against the knave."

"Hush!" said Cedric, "for here he comes."

Introduced with little ceremony, and advancing with fear and hesitation, and many a bow of deep humility, a tall, thin old man, who, however, had lost by the habit of stooping much of his actual height, approached the lower end of the board. His features, keen and regular, with an aquiline nose and piercing black eyes; his high and wrinkled forehead, and long gray hair and beard,—would have been considered as handsome, had they not been the marks of a physiognomy peculiar to a race which, during those dark ages, was alike detested by the credulous and prejudiced vulgar, and persecuted by the greedy and rapacious nobility, and who, perhaps, owing to that very hatred and persecution, had adopted a national character, in which there was much, to say the least, mean and unamiable.

The Jew's dress, which appeared to have suffered considerably from the storm, was a plain russet cloak of many folds, covering a dark-purple tunic. He had large boots lined with fur, and a belt around his waist, which sustained a small knife, together with a case for writing materials, but no weapon. He wore a high square yellow cap of a peculiar fashion, assigned to his nation to distinguish them from Christians, and which he doffed with great humility at the door of the hall.

The reception of this person in the hall of Cedric the Saxon was such as might have satisfied the most prejudiced enemy of the tribes of Israel. Cedric himself coldly nodded in answer to the Jew's repeated salutations, and signed to him to take place at the lower end of the table, where, however, no one offered to

[1] An imaginary deity, considered by crusaders a Mohammedan deity

[2] A ham, salted, smoked, or dried.

make room for him. On the contrary, as he passed along the file, casting a timid, supplicating glance, and turning towards each of those who occupied the lower end of the board, the Saxon domestics squared their shoulders, and continued to devour their supper with great perseverance, paying not the least attention to the wants of the new guest. The attendants of the abbot crossed themselves, with looks of pious horror; and the very heathen Saracens, as Isaac drew near them, curled up their whiskers with indignation, and laid their hands on their poniards, as if ready to rid themselves by the most desperate means from the apprehended contamination of his nearer approach.

Probably the same motives which induced Cedric to open his hall to this son of a rejected people would have made him insist on his attendants receiving Isaac with more courtesy. But the abbot had at this moment engaged him in a most interesting discussion on the breed and character of his favorite hounds, which he would not have interrupted for matters of much greater importance than that of a Jew going to bed supperless. While Isaac thus stood an outcast in the present society, like his people among the nations, looking in vain for welcome or resting-place, the pilgrim who sat by the chimney took compassion upon him, and resigned his seat, saying briefly, "Old man, my garments are dried, my hunger is appeased: thou art both wet and fasting." So saying, he gathered together and brought to a flame the decaying brands which lay scattered on the ample hearth; took from the larger board a mess of pottage and seethed kid, placed it upon the small table at which he had himself supped, and, without waiting the Jew's thanks, went to the other side of the hall —whether from unwillingness to hold more close communication with the object of his benevolence, or from a wish to draw near to the upper end of the table, seemed uncertain.

Had there been painters in those days capable to execute such a subject, the Jew, as he bent his withered form, and expanded his chilled and trembling hands over the fire, would have formed no bad emblematical personification of the winter season. Hav-

ing dispelled the cold, he turned eagerly to the smoking mess which was placed before him, and ate with a haste and an apparent relish that seemed to betoken long abstinence from food.

Meanwhile the abbot and Cedric continued their discourse upon hunting; the Lady Rowena seemed engaged in conversation with one of her attendant females; and the haughty Templar, whose eye wandered from the Jew to the Saxon beauty, revolved in his mind thoughts which appeared deeply to interest him.

"I marvel, worthy Cedric," said the abbot, as their discourse proceeded, "that, great as your predilection is for your own manly language, you do not receive the Norman-French into your favor, so far at least as the mystery of woodcraft and hunting is concerned. Surely no tongue is so rich in the various phrases which the field-sports demand, or furnishes means to the experienced woodman so well to express his jovial art."

"Good Father Aymer," said the Saxon, "be it known to you, I care not for those over-sea[1] refinements, without which I can well enough take my pleasure in the woods. I can wind my horn, though I call not the blast either a *recheate*[2] or a *morte*;[3] I can cheer my dogs on the prey, and I can flay and quarter the animal when it is brought down, without using the new-fangled jargon of *curee*, *arbor*, *nombles*, and all the babble of the fabulous Sir Tristrem."[4]

"The French," said the Templar, raising his voice with the presumptuous and authoritative tone which he used upon all occasions, "is not only the natural language of the chase, but that

[1] Referring to the innovations of the Normans.

[2] The call on the hunting-horn to bring back the hounds when they have lost the scent.

[3] The sounding of the horn in the chase at the death of the game.

[4] The Normans formally separated from common life the terms of the chase. The objects of their pursuit, whether bird or animal, changed their name each year. There were a hundred conventional terms, all from the French, to be ignorant of which was to be without the distinguishing marks of a gentleman. The origin of this science was imputed to Sir Tristrem, one of King Arthur's knights, famous for his love for the beautiful Ysolte.

of love and war, in which ladies should be won, and enemies defied."

"Pledge me in a cup of wine, Sir Templar," said Cedric, "and fill another to the abbot, while I look back some thirty years to tell you another tale. As Cedric the Saxon then was, his plain English tale needed no garnish from French troubadours,[1] when it was told in the ear of beauty; and the field of Northallerton, upon the day of the Holy Standard, could tell whether the Saxon war-cry was not heard as far within the ranks of the Scottish host as the *cri de guerre*[2] of the boldest Norman baron. To the memory of the brave who fought there! Pledge me, my guests." He drank deep, and went on with increasing warmth. "Ay, that was a day of cleaving of shields, when a hundred banners were bent forward over the heads of the valiant, and blood flowed round like water, and death was held better than flight. A Saxon bard[3] had called it a feast of the swords, a gathering of the eagles to the prey, the clashing of bills[4] upon shield and helmet, the shouting of battle more joyful than the clamor of a bridal. But our bards are no more," he said. "Our deeds are lost in those of another race: our language, our very name, is hastening to decay, and none mourns for it save one solitary old man. — Cupbearer, knave, fill the goblets. — To the strong in arms, Sir Templar, be their race or language what it will, who now bear them best in Palestine among the champions of the Cross!"

"It becomes not one wearing this badge to answer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert; "yet to whom, besides the sworn champions of the Holy Sepulcher, can the palm be assigned among the champions of the Cross?"

[1] The minstrels or lyric poets of the south of France, called so from the Provençal verb *troubar* ("to invent"), and who flourished during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.

[2] The shout of battle; a war-cry.

[3] A minstrel or poet.

[4] A weapon (used by infantry) consisting of a broad blade fixed upon a long staff, the blade having a cutting-edge and shaped like a scythe. On the back of the blade a short pike protruded, and at the top or point the blade lengthened out above the scythe-shaped part into another sharp-pointed pike.

"To the Knights Hospitalers," said the abbot; "I have a brother of their order."

"I impeach not their fame," said the Templar; "nevertheless"—

"I think, friend Cedric," said Wamba, interfering, "that had Richard of the Lion's Heart been wise enough to have taken a fool's advice, he might have staid at home with his merry Englishmen, and left the recovery of Jerusalem to those same knights who had most to do with the loss of it."

"Were there, then, none in the English army," said the Lady Rowena, "whose names are worthy to be mentioned with the Knights of the Temple and of St. John?"

"Forgive me, lady," replied De Bois-Guilbert, "the English monarch did indeed bring to Palestine a host of gallant warriors, second only to those whose breasts have been the unceasing bulwark of that blessed land."

"Second to NONE," said the pilgrim, who had stood near enough to hear, and had listened to this conversation with marked impatience. All turned towards the spot from whence this unexpected asseveration was heard. "I say," repeated the pilgrim in a firm and strong voice, "that the English chivalry were second to NONE who ever drew sword in defense of the Holy Land. I say, besides, for I saw it, that King Richard himself, and five of his knights, held a tournament after the taking of St. John-de-Acre,[1] as challengers against all comers. I say that on that day each knight ran three courses, and cast to the ground three antagonists. I add that seven of these assailants were Knights of the Temple; and Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert well knows the truth of what I tell you."

It is impossible for language to describe the bitter scowl of rage which rendered yet darker the swarthy countenance of the Templar. In the extremity of his resentment and confusion, his

[1] Accho or Acre. In the time of the crusaders, Europeans knew the place generally as Acon; afterward, by reason of the occupancy of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, it was known as St. Jean d'Acre, or Acre.

quivering fingers griped towards the handle of his sword, and perhaps only withdrew from the consciousness that no act of violence could be safely executed in that place and presence. Cedric, whose feelings were all of a right onward and simple kind, and were seldom occupied by more than one object at once, omitted, in the joyous glee with which he heard of the glory of his countrymen, to remark the angry confusion of his guest. "I would give thee this golden bracelet, pilgrim," he said, "couldst thou tell me the names of those knights who upheld so gallantly the renown of merry England."

"That will I do blithely," replied the pilgrim, "and without guerdon:[1] my oath, for a time, prohibits me from touching gold."

"I will wear the bracelet for you, if you will, friend palmer," said Wamba.

"The first in honor as in arms, in renown as in place," said the pilgrim, "was the brave Richard, King of England."

"I forgive him," said Cedric; "I forgive him his descent from the tyrant Duke William."

"The Earl of Leicester was the second," continued the pilgrim. "Sir Thomas Multon of Gilsland was the third."

"Of Saxon descent, he at least," said Cedric with exultation.

"Sir Foulk Doilly the fourth," proceeded the pilgrim.

"Saxon also, at least by the mother's side," continued Cedric, who listened with the utmost eagerness, and forgot, in part at least, his hatred to the Normans, in the common triumph of the King of England and his islanders. "And who was the fifth?" he demanded.

"The fifth was Sir Edwin Turneham."

"Genuine Saxon, by the soul of Hengist!" shouted Cedric. "And the sixth?" he continued with eagerness — "how name you the sixth?"

"The sixth," said the palmer after a pause, in which he seemed to recollect himself, "was a young knight of lesser renown and

[1] Reward.

lower rank, assumed into that honorable company less to aid their enterprise than to make up their number. His name dwells not in my memory."

"Sir Palmer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert scornfully, "this assumed forgetfulness, after so much has been remembered, comes too late to serve your purpose. I will myself tell the name of the knight before whose lance fortune and my horse's fault occasioned my falling: it was the Knight of Ivanhoe. Nor was there one of the six that, for his years, had more renown in arms. Yet this will I say, and loudly, that were he in England, and durst repeat in this week's tournament the challenge of St. John-de-Acre, I, mounted and armed as I now am, would give him every advantage of weapons, and abide the result."

"Your challenge would be soon answered," replied the palmer, "were your antagonist near you. As the matter is, disturb not the peaceful hall with vaunts of the issue of a conflict which you well know cannot take place. If Ivanhoe ever returns from Palestine, I will be his surety that he meets you."

"A goodly security!" said the Knight Templar. "And what do you proffer as a pledge?"

"This reliquary," said the palmer, taking a small ivory box from his bosom, and crossing himself, "containing a portion of the true cross, brought from the Monastery of Mount Carmel."[1]

The Prior of Jorvaulx crossed himself and repeated a paternoster,[2] in which all devoutly joined, excepting the Jew, the Mohammedans, and the Templar; the latter of whom, without veiling his bonnet, or testifying any reverence for the alleged sanctity of the relic, took from his neck a gold chain, which he flung on

[1] This monastery and order (Order of St. Mary of Mount Carmel) was founded about 1156 on Mount Carmel, Palestine, and received its first rule, 1209, from Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem.

[2] The Lord's Prayer, called paternoster from the first two words, *pater noster* ("Our Father"), of the Latin version.

the board, saying, "Let Prior Aymer hold my pledge and that of this nameless vagrant, in token that when the Knight of Ivanhoe comes within the four seas of Britain, he underlies the challenge of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, which if he answer not, I will proclaim him as a coward on the walls of every Temple Court in Europe."

"It will not need," said the Lady Rowena, breaking silence; "my voice shall be heard, if no other in this hall is raised in behalf of the absent Ivanhoe. I affirm he will meet fairly every honorable challenge. Could my weak warrant add security to the inestimable pledge of this holy pilgrim, I would pledge name and fame that Ivanhoe gives this proud knight the meeting he desires."

A crowd of conflicting emotions seemed to have occupied Cedric, and kept him silent during this discussion. Gratified pride, resentment, embarrassment, chased each other over his broad and open brow, like the shadow of clouds drifting over a harvest-field; while his attendants, on whom the name of the sixth knight seemed to produce an effect almost electrical, hung in suspense upon their master's looks. But when Rowena spoke, the sound of her voice seemed to startle him from his silence.

"Lady," said Cedric, "this beseems not. Were further pledge necessary, I myself, offended, and justly offended, as I am, would yet gage my honor for the honor of Ivanhoe. But the wager of battle is complete, even according to the fantastic fashions of Norman chivalry. — Is it not, Father Aymer?"

"It is," replied the prior; "and the blessed relic and rich chain will I bestow safely in the treasury of our convent, until the decision of this warlike challenge."

Having thus spoken, he crossed himself again and again, and after many genuflections and muttered prayers he delivered the reliquary to Brother Ambrose, his attendant monk, while he himself swept up with less ceremony, but perhaps with no less internal satisfaction, the golden chain, and bestowed it in a pouch

lined with perfumed leather which opened under his arm. "And now, Sir Cedric," he said, "my ears are chiming vespers with the strength of your good wine; permit us another pledge to the welfare of the Lady Rowena, and indulge us with liberty to pass to our repose."

"By the rood[1] of Bromholme," said the Saxon, "you do but small credit to your fame, Sir Prior! Report speaks you a bonny monk, that would hear the matin chime[2] ere he quitted his bowl; and, old as I am, I feared to have shame in encountering you. But, by my faith, a Saxon boy of twelve in my time would not so soon have relinquished his goblet."

The prior had his own reasons, however, for persevering in the course of temperance which he had adopted. On the present occasion he had an instinctive apprehension of the fiery temper of the Saxon, and saw the danger that the reckless and presumptuous spirit, of which his companion had already given so many proofs, might at length produce some disagreeable explosion. He therefore gently insinuated the incapacity of the native of any other country to engage in the genial conflict of the bowl with the hardy and strong-headed Saxons; something he mentioned, but slightly, about his own holy character, and ended by pressing his proposal to depart to repose.

The grace-cup was accordingly served around; and the guests, after making deep obeisance to their landlord and to the Lady Rowena, arose and mingled in the hall, while the heads of the family, by separate doors, retired with their attendants.

"Unbelieving dog," said the Templar to Isaac the Jew, as he passed him in the throng, "dost thou bend thy course to the tournament?"

"I do so propose," replied Isaac, bowing in all humility, "if it please your reverend valor."

"Ay," said the knight; "to gnaw the bowels of our nobles with usury, and to gull women and boys with gauds and toys. I warrant thee store of shekels in thy Jewish scrip."

[1] Cross. [2] The matin chime is the morning bell for prayers.

"Not a shekel,[1] not a silver penny, not a halfling,[2] so help me, the God of Abraham!" said the Jew, clasping his hands. "I go but to seek the assistance of some brethren of my tribe to aid me to pay the fine which the exchequer of the Jews[3] have imposed upon me. Father Jacob be my speed! I am an impoverished wretch. The very gaberdine[4] I wear is borrowed from Reuben of Tadcaster."

The Templar smiled sourly as he replied, "Beshrew[5] thee for a false-hearted liar!" and passing onward, as if disdaining further conference, he communed with his Moslem slaves in a language unknown to the bystanders. The poor Israelite seemed so staggered by the address of the military monk, that the Templar had passed on to the extremity of the hall ere he raised his head from the humble posture which he had assumed, so far as to be sensible of his departure; and when he did look around, it was with the astonished air of one at whose feet a thunderbolt has just burst, and who hears still the astounding report ringing in his ears.

The Templar and prior were shortly after marshaled to their sleeping-apartments by the steward and the cupbearer, each attended by two torchbearers and two servants carrying refreshments, while servants of inferior condition indicated to their retinue and to the other guests their respective places of repose.

[1] A Jewish coin varying in value from about sixty cents (silver) to about five dollars (gold).

[2] Half a penny.

[3] Jews were subjected to an exchequer which laid them under the most exorbitant impositions.

[4] A long coarse cloak or cassock worn by Jews in the middle ages.

[5] A word used in wishing a curse upon one, often in mild imprecation.

CHAPTER VI.

AS the palmer, lighted by a domestic with a torch, passed through the intricate combination of apartments of this large and irregular mansion, the cupbearer, coming behind him, whispered in his ear, that, if he had no objection to a cup of good mead in his apartment, there were many domestics in that family who would gladly hear the news he had brought from the Holy Land, and particularly that which concerned the Knight of Ivanhoe. Wamba presently appeared to urge the same request, observing that a cup after midnight was worth three after curfew. The palmer thanked them for their courtesy, but observed that he had included in his religious vow an obligation never to speak in the kitchen on matters which were prohibited in the hall. "That vow," said Wamba to the cupbearer, "would scarce suit a serving-man."

The cupbearer shrugged up his shoulders in displeasure. "I thought to have lodged him in the solere[1] chamber," said he; "but since he is so unsocial to Christians, e'en let him take the next stall to Isaac the Jew's. — Anwold," said he to the torch-bearer, "carry the pilgrim to the southern cell. — I give you good-night," he added, "Sir Palmer, with small thanks for short courtesy."

"Good-night, and Our Lady's benison,"[2] said the palmer with composure; and his guide moved forward.

In a small antechamber, into which several doors opened, and which was lighted by a small iron lamp, they met a second interruption from the waiting-maid of Rowena, who, saying in a tone of authority that her mistress desired to speak with the palmer, took the torch from the hand of Anwold, and, bidding him await her return, made a sign to the palmer to follow. Apparently he did not think it proper to decline this invitation as he had done

[1] An upper chamber in a house, exposed to the sun.

[2] The benediction or blessing of the Virgin Mary.

the former; for, though his gesture indicated some surprise at the summons, he obeyed it without answer or remonstrance.

A short passage, and an ascent of seven steps, each of which was composed of a solid beam of oak, led him to the apartment of the Lady Rowena, the rude magnificence of which corresponded to the respect which was paid to her by the lord of the mansion. The walls were covered with embroidered hangings, on which different-colored silks, interwoven with gold and silver threads, had been employed with all the art of which the age was capable, to represent the sports of hunting and hawking. The bed was adorned with the same rich tapestry, and surrounded with curtains dyed with purple. The seats had also their stained coverings, and one, which was higher than the rest, was accommodated with a footstool of ivory, curiously carved.

No fewer than four silver candelabras, holding great waxen torches, served to illuminate this apartment. Yet let not modern beauty envy the magnificence of a Saxon princess. The walls of the apartment were so ill finished and so full of crevices that the rich hangings shook to the night blast, and, in despite of a sort of screen intended to protect them from the wind, the flame of the torches streamed sideways into the air, like the unfurled pennon of a chieftain. Magnificence there was, with some rude attempt at taste; but of comfort there was little, and, being unknown, it was unmissed.

The Lady Rowena, with three of her attendants standing at her back and arranging her hair ere she lay down to rest, was seated in the sort of throne already mentioned, and looked as if born to exact general homage. The pilgrim acknowledged her claim to it by a low genuflection.

"Rise, palmer," said she graciously. "The defender of the absent has a right to favorable reception from all who value truth, and honor manhood." She then said to her train, "Retire, excepting only Elgitha. I would speak with this holy pilgrim."

The maidens, without leaving the apartment, retired to its farther extremity, and sat down on a small bench against the wall,

where they remained mute as statues, though at such a distance that their whispers could not have interrupted the conversation of their mistress.

"Pilgrim," said the lady, after a moment's pause, during which she seemed uncertain how to address him, "you this night mentioned a name — I mean," she said with a degree of effort, "the name of Ivanhoe — in the halls where by nature and kindred it should have sounded most acceptably; and yet, such is the perverse course of fate, that, of many whose hearts must have throbbed at the sound, I only dare ask you where and in what condition you left him of whom you spoke. We heard, that, having remained in Palestine on account of his impaired health after the departure of the English army, he had experienced the persecution of the French faction, to whom the Templars are known to be attached."

"I know little of the Knight of Ivanhoe," answered the palmer with a troubled voice. "I would I knew him better, since you, lady, are interested in his fate. He hath, I believe, surmounted the persecution of his enemies in Palestine, and is on the eve of returning to England, where you, lady, must know better than I what is his chance of happiness."

The Lady Rowena sighed deeply, and asked more particularly when the Knight of Ivanhoe might be expected in his native country, and whether he would not be exposed to great dangers by the road. On the first point the palmer professed ignorance; on the second, he said that the voyage might be safely made by the way of Venice and Genoa, and from thence through France to England. Ivanhoe, he said, was so well acquainted with the language and manners of the French, that there was no fear of his incurring any hazard during that part of his travels.

"Would to God," said the Lady Rowena, "he were here safely arrived, and able to bear arms in the approaching tourney,[1] in which the chivalry of this land are expected to display their address and valor! Should Athelstane of Coningsburgh obtain the

[1] Tournament.

prize, Ivanhoe is like to hear evil tidings when he reaches England. — How looked he, stranger, when you last saw him? Had disease laid her hand heavy upon his strength and comeliness?"

"He was darker," said the palmer, "and thinner, than when he came from Cyprus in the train of Cœur-de-Lion, and care seemed to sit heavy on his brow; but I approached not his presence, because he is unknown to me."

"He will," said the lady, "I fear, find little in his native land to clear those clouds from his countenance. Thanks, good pilgrim, for your information concerning the companion of my childhood. — Maidens," she said, "draw near. Offer the sleeping-cup to this holy man, whom I will no longer detain from repose."

One of the maidens presented a silver cup containing a rich mixture of wine and spice, which Rowena barely put to her lips. It was then offered to the palmer, who, after a low obeisance, tasted a few drops.

"Accept this alms, friend," continued the lady, offering a piece of gold, "in acknowledgment of thy painful travail, and of the shrines thou hast visited."

The palmer received the boon with another low reverence, and followed Edwina out of the apartment.

In the anteroom he found his attendant Anwold, who, taking the torch from the hand of the waiting-maid, conducted him with more haste than ceremony to an exterior and ignoble part of the building, where a number of small apartments, or rather cells, served for sleeping-places to the lower order of domestics, and to strangers of mean degree.

"In which of these sleeps the Jew?" said the pilgrim.

"The unbelieving dog," answered Anwold, "kennels in the cell next your Holiness. — St. Dunstan, how it must be scraped and cleansed ere it be again fit for a Christian!"

"And where sleeps Gurth the swineherd?" said the stranger.

"Gurth," replied the bondsman, "sleeps in the cell on your right, as the Jew on that to your left. You might have occupied a more honorable place had you accepted of Oswald's invitation."

"It is as well as it is," said the palmer; "the company even of a Jew can hardly spread contamination through an oaken partition."

So saying, he entered the cabin allotted to him, and, taking the torch from the domestic's hand, thanked him, and wished him good-night. Having shut the door of his cell, he placed the torch in a candlestick made of wood, and looked around his sleeping-apartment, the furniture of which was of the most simple kind. It consisted of a rude wooden stool, and still ruder hutch or bed-frame stuffed with clean straw, and accommodated with two or three sheepskins by way of bedclothes.

The palmer, having extinguished his torch, threw himself, without taking off any part of his clothes, on this rude couch, and slept, or at least retained his recumbent posture, till the earliest sunbeams found their way through the little grated window which served at once to admit both air and light to his uncomfortable cell. He then started up, and after repeating his matins, and adjusting his dress, he left it, and entered that of Isaac the Jew, lifting the latch as gently as he could.

The inmate was lying in troubled slumber upon a couch similar to that on which the palmer himself had passed the night. Such parts of his dress as the Jew had laid aside on the preceding evening were disposed carefully around his person as if to prevent the hazard of their being carried off during his slumbers. There was a trouble on his brow amounting almost to agony. His hands and arms moved convulsively, as if struggling with the nightmare; and besides several ejaculations in Hebrew, the following were distinctly heard in the Norman-English, or mixed language of the country: "For the sake of the God of Abraham, spare an unhappy old man! I am poor, I am penniless. Should your irons wrench my limbs asunder, I could not gratify you!"

The palmer awaited not the end of the Jew's vision, but stirred him with his pilgrim's staff. The touch probably associated, as is usual, with some of the apprehensions excited by his dream; for the old man started up, his gray hair standing almost erect

upon his head, and huddling some part of his garments about him, while he held the detached pieces with the tenacious grasp of a falcon, he fixed upon the palmer his keen black eyes, expressive of wild surprise and of bodily apprehension.

"Fear nothing from me, Isaac," said the palmer; "I come as your friend."

"The God of Israel requite you," said the Jew, greatly relieved. "I dreamed— But, Father Abraham be praised! it was but a dream." Then, collecting himself, he added in his usual tone, "And what may it be your pleasure to want at so early an hour with the poor Jew?"

"It is to tell you," said the palmer, "that if you leave not this mansion instantly, and travel not with some haste, your journey may prove a dangerous one."

"Holy father!" said the Jew, "whom could it interest to endanger so poor a wretch as I am?"

"The purpose you can best guess," said the pilgrim. "But rely on this, that when the Templar crossed the hall yesternight, he spoke to his Mussulman slaves in the Saracen language, which I well understand, and charged them this morning to watch the journey of the Jew, to seize upon him when at a convenient distance from the mansion, and to conduct him to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin, or to that of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

It is impossible to describe the extremity of terror which seized upon the Jew at this information, and seemed at once to overpower his whole faculties. His arms fell down to his sides, and his head dropped on his breast, his knees bent under his weight, every nerve and muscle of his frame seemed to collapse and lose its energy; and he sunk at the foot of the palmer, not in the fashion of one who intentionally stoops, kneels, or prostrates himself to excite compassion, but like a man borne down on all sides by the pressure of some invisible force which crushes him to the earth without the power of resistance.

"Holy God of Abraham!" was his first exclamation, folding and elevating his wrinkled hands, but without raising his gray

head from the pavement. "O holy Moses! O blessed Aaron! the dream is not dreamed for naught, and the vision cometh not in vain! I feel their irons already tear my sinews. I feel the rack pass over my body like the saws and harrows and axes of iron over the men of Rabbah,[1] and of the cities of the children of Ammon."

"Stand up, Isaac, and hearken to me," said the palmer, who viewed the extremity of his distress with a compassion in which contempt was largely mingled. "You have cause for your terror, considering how your brethren have been used, in order to extort from them their hoards, both by princes and nobles; but stand up, I say, and I will point out to you the means of escape. Leave this mansion instantly, while its inmates sleep sound after the last night's revel. I will guide you by the secret paths of the forest, known as well to me as to any forester that ranges it, and I will not leave you till you are under safe-conduct of some chief or baron going to the tournament, whose good will you have probably the means of securing."

As the ears of Isaac received the hopes of escape which this speech intimated, he began gradually to raise himself up from the ground, until he fairly rested upon his knees, throwing back his long gray hair and beard, and fixing his keen black eyes upon the palmer's face with a look expressive at once of hope and fear not unmingled with suspicion. But when he heard the concluding part of the sentence, his original terror appeared to revive in full force, and he dropped once more on his face, exclaiming, "*I* possess the means of securing good will! Alas! there is but one road to the favor of a Christian; and how can the poor Jew find it, whom extortions have already reduced to the misery of Lazarus?" Then, as if suspicion had overpowered his other feelings, he suddenly exclaimed, "For the love of God, young man, betray me not! For the sake of the great Father who made us all, — Jew as well as Gentile, Israelite and Ishmaelite, — do me no

[1] The chief city of the Ammonites, in the mountains of Gilead, near the source of the Arnon.

treason! I have not means to secure the good will of a Christian beggar, were he rating it at a single penny." As he spoke these last words, he raised himself, and grasped the palmer's mantle with a look of the most earnest entreaty. The pilgrim extricated himself, as if there were contamination in the touch.

"Wert thou loaded with all the wealth of thy tribe," he said, "what interest have I to injure thee? In this dress I am vowed to poverty, nor do I change it for aught save a horse and a coat of mail. Yet think not that I care for thy company, or propose myself advantage by it. Remain here if thou wilt. Cedric the Saxon may protect thee."

"Alas!" said the Jew, "he will not let me travel in his train, — Saxon or Norman will be equally ashamed of the poor Israelite, — and to travel by myself through the domains of Philip de Malvoisin and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf — Good youth, I will go with you! Let us haste, let us gird up our loins, let us flee! Here is thy staff, why wilt thou tarry?"

"I tarry not," said the pilgrim, giving way to the urgency of his companion; "but I must secure the means of leaving this place. Follow me."

He led the way to the adjoining cell, which was occupied by Gurth the swineherd. "Arise, Gurth," said the pilgrim, "arise quickly! Undo the postern gate, and let out the Jew and me."

Gurth, whose occupation, though now held so mean, gave him as much consequence in Saxon England as that of Eumæus in Ithaca,[1] was offended at the familiar and commanding tone assumed by the palmer. "The Jew leaving Rotherwood!" said he, raising himself on his elbow, and looking superciliously at him without quitting his pallet, "and traveling in company with the palmer to boot"—

"I should as soon have dreamed," said Wamba, who entered the apartment at the instant, "of his stealing away with a gammon of bacon."

[1] One of the Ionian Islands, about seventeen miles west of the mainland of Greece, and the home of Ulysses.

"Nevertheless," said Gurth, again laying down his head on the wooden log which served him for a pillow, "both Jew and Gentile must be content to abide the opening of the great gate. We suffer no visitors to depart by stealth at these unseasonable hours."

"Nevertheless," said the pilgrim in a commanding tone, "you will not, I think, refuse me that favor."

So saying, he stooped over the bed of the recumbent swineherd, and whispered something in his ear in Saxon. Gurth started up as if electrified. The pilgrim, raising his finger in an attitude as if to express caution, added, "Gurth, beware! Thou art wont to be prudent. I say, undo the postern. Thou shalt know more anon."

With hasty alacrity Gurth obeyed him, while Wamba and the Jew followed, both wondering at the sudden change in the swineherd's demeanor.

"My mule, my mule!" said the Jew, as soon as they stood without the postern.

"Fetch him his mule," said the pilgrim; "and—hearest thou? —let me have another, that I may bear him company till he is beyond these parts. I will return it safely to some of Cedric's train at Ashby. And do thou"— He whispered the rest in Gurth's ear.

"Willingly, most willingly, shall it be done," said Gurth, and instantly departed to execute the commission.

"I wish I knew," said Wamba, when his comrade's back was turned, "what you palmers learn in the Holy Land."

"To say our orisons,[1] fool," answered the pilgrim, "to repent our sins, and to mortify ourselves with fastings, vigils, and long prayers."

"Something more potent than that," answered the Jester; "for when would repentance or prayer make Gurth do a courtesy, or fasting or vigil persuade him to lend you a mule? I trow you might as well have told his favorite black boar of thy vigils and penance, and wouldst have gotten as civil an answer."

[1] Prayers.

"Go to!" said the pilgrim, "thou art but a Saxon fool."

"Thou sayest well," said the Jester. "Had I been born a Norman, as I think thou art, I would have had luck on my side, and been next door to a wise man."

At this moment Gurth appeared on the opposite side of the moat[1] with the mules. The travelers crossed the ditch upon a drawbridge of only two planks' breadth, the narrowness of which was matched with the straitness of the postern, and with a little wicket[2] in the exterior palisade, which gave access to the forest. No sooner had they reached the mules, than the Jew, with hasty and trembling hands, secured behind the saddle a small bag of blue buckram, which he took from under his cloak, containing, as he muttered, "a change of raiment — only a change of raiment." Then getting upon the animal with more alacrity and haste than could have been anticipated from his years, he lost no time in so disposing of the skirts of his gaberdine as to conceal completely from observation the burden which he had thus deposited *en croupe*.[3]

The pilgrim mounted with more deliberation, reaching, as he departed, his hand to Gurth, who kissed it with the utmost possible veneration. The swineherd stood gazing after the travelers until they were lost under the boughs of the forest path, when he was disturbed from his reverie by the voice of Wamba.

"Knowest thou," said the Jester, "my good friend Gurth, that thou art strangely courteous and most unwontedly pious on this summer morning? I would I were a black prior or a barefoot palmer, to avail myself of thy unwonted zeal and courtesy! Certes,[4] I would make more out of it than a kiss of the hand."

"Thou art no fool thus far, Wamba," answered Gurth, "though thou arguest from appearances, and the wisest of us can do no more. — But it is time to look after my charge."

[1] A trench surrounding the ramparts of a castle. It was generally filled with water.

[2] A little gate or door in or near a larger one.

[3] Behind the rider.

[4] Certainly.

So saying, he turned back to the mansion, attended by the Jester.

Meanwhile the travelers continued to press on their journey with a dispatch which argued the extremity of the Jew's fears, since persons at his age are seldom fond of rapid motion. The palmer, to whom every path and outlet in the wood appeared to be familiar, led the way through the most devious paths, and more than once excited anew the suspicion of the Israelite[1] that he intended to betray him into some ambuscade of his enemies.

When the travelers had pushed on at a rapid rate, the palmer at length broke silence.

"That large decayed oak," he said, "marks the boundaries over which Front-de-Bœuf claims authority. We are long since far from those of Malvoisin. There is now no fear of pursuit."

"May the wheels of their chariots be taken off," said the Jew, "like those of the host of Pharaoh, that they may drive heavily! —But leave me not, good pilgrim. Think but of that fierce and savage Templar, with his Saracen slaves! They will regard neither territory, nor manor, nor lordship."

"Our roads," said the palmer, "should here separate; for it beseems not men of my character and thine to travel together longer than needs must be. Besides, what succor couldst thou have from me, a peaceful pilgrim, against two armed heathens?"

"O good youth!" answered the Jew, "thou canst defend me, and I know thou wouldst. Poor as I am, I will requite it; not with money,—for money, so help me, my Father Abraham! I have none,—but"—

"Money and recompense," said the palmer, interrupting him, "I have already said I require not of thee. Guide thee I can, and it may be even in some sort defend thee, since to protect a Jew against a Saracen can scarce be accounted unworthy of a Christian. Therefore, Jew, I will see thee safe under some fitting escort. We are now not far from the town of Sheffield,

[1] Jew.

where thou mayest easily find many of thy tribe with whom to take refuge."

"The blessing of Jacob be upon thee, good youth!" said the Jew. "In Sheffield I can harbor with my kinsman Zareth, and find some means of traveling forth with safety."

"Be it so," said the palmer. "At Sheffield, then, we part, and half an hour's riding will bring us in sight of that town."

The half-hour was spent in perfect silence on both parts; the pilgrim perhaps disdaining to address the Jew except in case of absolute necessity, and the Jew not presuming to force a conversation with a person whose journey to the Holy Sepulcher gave a sort of sanctity to his character. They paused on the top of a gently rising bank; and the pilgrim, pointing to the town of Sheffield, which lay beneath them, repeated the words, "Here, then, we part."

"Not till you have had the poor Jew's thanks," said Isaac; "for I presume not to ask you to go with me to my kinsman Zareth's, who might aid me with some means of repaying your good offices."

"I have already said," answered the pilgrim, "that I desire no recompense. If among the huge list of thy debtors thou wilt, for my sake, spare the gyves and the dungeon to some unhappy Christian who stands in thy danger, I shall hold this morning's service to thee well bestowed."

"Stay, stay!" said the Jew, laying hold of his garment. "Something would I do more than this, something for thyself. God knows the Jew is poor,—yes, Isaac is the beggar of his tribe,—but forgive me should I guess what thou most lackest at this moment."

"If thou wert to guess truly," said the palmer, "it is what thou canst not supply wert thou as wealthy as thou sayest thou art poor."

"As I say?" echoed the Jew. "Oh, believe it! I say but the truth. I am a plundered, indebted, distressed man. Hard hands have wrung from me my goods, my money, my ships, and all that

I possessed. Yet I can tell thee what thou lackest, and, it may be, supply it too. Thy wish even now is for a horse and armor."

The palmer started, and turned suddenly towards the Jew. "What fiend prompted that guess?" said he hastily.

"No matter," said the Jew, smiling, "so that it be a true one; and, as I can guess thy want, so I can supply it."

"But consider," said the palmer, "my character, my dress, my vow."

"I know you Christians," replied the Jew, "and that the noblest of you will take the staff and sandal in superstitious penance, and walk afoot to visit the graves of dead men."

"Blaspheme not, Jew," said the pilgrim sternly.

"Forgive me," said the Jew; "I spoke rashly. But there dropped words from you last night and this morning, that, like sparks from flint, showed the metal within; and in the bosom of that palmer's gown is hidden a knight's chain and spurs of gold. They glanced as you stooped over my bed in the morning."

The pilgrim could not forbear smiling. "Were thy garments searched by as curious an eye, Isaac," said he, "what discoveries might not be made?"

"No more of that," said the Jew, changing color; and, drawing forth his writing materials in haste, as if to stop the conversation, he began to write upon a piece of paper, which he supported on the top of his yellow cap, without dismounting from his mule. When he had finished, he delivered the scroll, which was in the Hebrew character, to the pilgrim, saying, "In the town of Leicester[1] all men know the rich Jew, Kirjath Jairam of Lombardy. Give him this scroll. He hath on sale six Milan harnesses[2] (the worst would suit a crowned head), ten goodly steeds (the worst might mount a king, were he to do battle for his throne): of these he will give thee thy choice, with everything

[1] A town of central England, about equidistant from London and Liverpool.

[2] Milan harness is armor made at Milan, the largest city of Lombardy, Italy.

else that can furnish thee forth for the tournament. When it is over, thou wilt return them safely — unless thou shouldst have wherewith to pay their value to the owner."

"But, Isaac," said the pilgrim, smiling, "dost thou know that in these sports the arms and steed of the knight who is unhorsed are forfeit to his victor? Now, I may be unfortunate, and so lose what I cannot replace or repay."

The Jew looked somewhat astounded at this possibility; but collecting his courage, he replied hastily, "No, no, no! It is impossible! I will not think so. The blessing of our Father will be upon thee. Thy lance will be powerful as the rod of Moses."

So saying, he was turning his mule's head away, when the palmer, in his turn, took hold of his gaberdine. "Nay, but, Isaac, thou knowest not all the risk. The steed may be slain, the armor injured, for I will spare neither horse nor man. Besides, those of thy tribe give nothing for nothing: something there must be paid for their use."

The Jew twisted himself in the saddle, like a man in a fit of the colic; but his better feelings predominated over those which were most familiar to him. "I care not," he said, "I care not. Let me go. If there is damage, it will cost you nothing: if there is usage money, Kirjath Jairam will forgive it for the sake of his kinsman Isaac. Fare thee well! — Yet hark thee, good youth," said he, turning about, "thrust thyself not too forward into this vain hurly-burly.[1] I speak not for endangering the steed and coat of armor, but for the sake of thine own life and limbs."

"Gramercy[2] for thy caution," said the palmer, again smiling. "I will use thy courtesy frankly, and it will go hard with me but I will requite it."

They parted, and took different roads for the town of Sheffield.

[1] **Tumult**; the confusion attending a combat. [2] Many thanks.

CHAPTER VII.

THE condition of the English nation was at this time sufficiently miserable. Yet the poor as well as the rich, the vulgar as well as the noble, in the event of a tournament, which was the grand spectacle of that age, felt as much interested as the half-starved citizen of Madrid, who has not a real[1] left to buy provisions for his family, feels in the issue of a bull-fight. Neither duty nor infirmity could keep youth or age from such exhibitions. The passage of arms, as it was called, which was to take place at Ashby, in the county of Leicester, — as champions of the first renown were to take the field in the presence of Prince John himself, who was expected to grace the lists,— had attracted universal attention, and an immense confluence of persons of all ranks hastened upon the appointed morning to the place of combat.

The scene was singularly romantic. On the verge of a wood, which approached to within a mile of the town of Ashby, was an extensive meadow of the finest and most beautiful green turf, surrounded on one side by the forest, and fringed on the other by straggling oak-trees, some of which had grown to an immense size. The ground, as if fashioned on purpose for the martial display which was intended, sloped gradually down on all sides to a level bottom, which was inclosed for the lists with strong palisades, forming a space of a quarter of a mile in length, and about half as broad. The form of the inclosure was an oblong square, save that the corners were considerably rounded off, in order to afford more convenience for the spectators. The openings for the entry of the combatants were at the northern and southern extremities of the lists, accessible by strong wooden gates, each wide enough to admit two horsemen riding abreast. At each of these portals were stationed two heralds, attended by six trum-

[1] A silver coin (Spanish) worth about five cents.

pets, as many pursuivants,[1] and a strong body of men-at-arms for maintaining order, and ascertaining the quality of the knights who proposed to engage in this martial game.

On a platform beyond the southern entrance, formed by a natural elevation of the ground, were pitched five magnificent pavilions,[2] adorned with pennons[3] of russet and black, the chosen colors of the five knights challengers. The cords of the tents were of the same color. Before each pavilion was suspended the shield of the knight by whom it was occupied; and beside it stood his squire,[4] quaintly disguised as a salvage[5] or silvan man, or in some other fantastic dress, according to the taste of his master, and the character he was pleased to assume during the game.[6] The central pavilion, as the place of honor, had been assigned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose renown in all games of chivalry,[7] no less than his connection with the knights who had undertaken this passage of arms, had occasioned him to be eagerly received into the company of the challengers, and even adopted as their chief and leader, though he had so recently joined them. On one side of his tent were pitched those of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Richard de Malvoisin; and on the other was the pavilion of Hugh de Grantmesnil, a noble baron in the vicinity, whose ancestor had been lord high steward of England in the time of the Conqueror, and his son William Rufus. Ralph de Vipont, a Knight of St. John of Jerusalem, who had some ancient possessions at a place called Heather, near Ashby-de-la-Zouche, occupied the fifth pavilion. From the entrance

[1] Attendants of heralds.

[2] Tents.

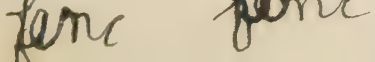
[3] Small banners or flags of a swallow-tail form, resembling the guidon, but about half its size.

[4] Attendant upon a knight.

[5] A woodsman.

[6] This sort of masquerade is supposed to have occasioned the introduction of supporters into the science of heraldry.

[7] From *cheval* ("horse"); originally a body of knights or horsemen. The term embraces the whole range of the system of knighthood that was the feature of the middle ages.



into the lists, a gently sloping passage, ten yards in breadth, led up to the platform on which the tents were pitched. It was strongly secured by a palisade on each side, as was the esplanade in front of the pavilions, and the whole was guarded by men-at-arms.

The northern access to the lists terminated in a similar entrance of thirty feet in breadth, at the extremity of which was a large inclosed space for such knights as might be disposed to enter the lists with the challengers, behind which were placed tents containing refreshments of every kind for their accommodation, with armorers, farriers, and other attendants, in readiness to give their services wherever they might be necessary.

The exterior of the lists was in part occupied by temporary galleries, spread with tapestry[1] and carpets, and accommodated with cushions for the convenience of those ladies and nobles who were expected to attend the tournament. A narrow space betwixt these galleries and the lists gave accommodation for yeomanry[2] and spectators of a better degree than the mere vulgar, and might be compared to the pit of a theater. The promiscuous multitude arranged themselves upon large banks of turf prepared for the purpose, which, aided by the natural elevation of the ground, enabled them to overlook the galleries, and obtain a fair view into the lists. Besides the accommodation which these stations afforded, many hundreds had perched themselves on the branches of the trees which surrounded the meadow, and even the steeple of a country church at some distance was crowded with spectators.

It only remains to notice, respecting the general arrangement, that one gallery in the very center of the eastern side of the lists, and consequently exactly opposite to the spot where the shock of the combat was to take place, was raised higher than the others, more richly decorated, and graced by a sort of throne and

[1] Fabrics richly worked with designs, pictorial or otherwise, generally used for wall-hangings.

[2] Freeholders; small land-owners; the class who come next in order to the gentry.

canopy, on which the royal arms were emblazoned.[1] Squires, pages, and yeomen[2] in rich liveries, waited around this place of honor, which was designed for Prince John and his attendants. Opposite to this royal gallery was another, elevated to the same height, on the western side of the lists, and more gayly if less sumptuously decorated than that destined for the prince himself. A train of pages and of young maidens, the most beautiful who could be selected, gayly dressed in fancy habits of green and pink, surrounded a throne decorated in the same colors. Among pennons and flags bearing wounded hearts, burning hearts, bleeding hearts, bows and quivers, and all the commonplace emblems of the triumphs of Cupid, a blazoned inscription informed the spectators that this seat of honor was designed for *La Royne de la Beaulté et des Amours*.[3] But who was to represent the Queen of Beauty and of Love on the present occasion no one was prepared to guess.

Meanwhile spectators of every description thronged forward to occupy their respective stations, and not without many quarrels concerning those which they were entitled to hold. Some of these were settled by the men-at-arms with brief ceremony, the shafts of their battle-axes and pommels of their swords being readily employed as arguments to convince the more refractory. Others, which involved the rival claims of more elevated persons, were determined by the heralds, or by the two marshals of the field, William de Wyvil and Stephen de Martival, who, armed at all points, rode up and down the lists to enforce and preserve good order among the spectators.

Gradually the galleries became filled with knights and nobles, in their robes of peace, whose long and rich-tinted mantles were contrasted with the gayer and more splendid habits of the ladies, who, in a greater proportion than even the men themselves,

[1] Embellished, decorated, especially with reference to heraldic or armorial bearings.

[2] Here the royal body-guard.

[3] The Queen of Beauty and of Love.

thronged to witness a sport which one would have thought too bloody and dangerous to afford their sex much pleasure. The lower and interior space was soon filled by substantial yeomen and burghers, and such of the lesser gentry as from modesty, poverty, or dubious title, durst not assume any higher place. It was, of course, amongst these that the most frequent disputes for precedence occurred.

"Dog of an unbeliever!" said an old man, whose threadbare tunic bore witness to his poverty, as his sword and dagger and golden chain intimated his pretensions to rank,—"whelp of a she-wolf! darest thou press upon a Christian, and a Norman gentleman of the blood of Montdidier?"

This rough expostulation was addressed to no other than our acquaintance Isaac, who, richly and even magnificently dressed in a gaberdine ornamented with lace and lined with fur, was endeavoring to make place in the foremost row beneath the gallery for his daughter, the beautiful Rebecca, who had joined him at Ashby, and who was now hanging on her father's arm, not a little terrified by the popular displeasure which seemed generally excited by her parent's presumption. But Isaac, though we have seen him sufficiently timid on other occasions, knew well that at present he had nothing to fear. It was not in places of general resort, or where their equals were assembled, that any avaricious or malevolent noble durst offer him injury. At such meetings the Jews were under the protection of the general law; and if that proved a weak assurance, it usually happened that there were among the persons assembled some barons who, for their own interested motives, were ready to act as their protectors. On the present occasion Isaac felt more than usually confident, being aware that Prince John was even then in the very act of negotiating a large loan from the Jews of York, to be secured upon certain jewels and lands. Isaac's own share in this transaction was considerable, and he well knew that the prince's eager desire to bring it to a conclusion would insure him his protection in the dilemma in which he stood.

Emboldened by these considerations, the Jew pursued his point, and jostled the Norman Christian, without respect either to his descent, quality, or religion. The complaints of the old man, however, excited the indignation of the bystanders. One of these, a stout, well-set yeoman arrayed in Lincoln green,[1] having twelve arrows stuck in his belt, with a baldric and badge of silver, and a bow of six feet length in his hand, turned short round; and while his countenance, which his constant exposure to weather had rendered brown as a hazel-nut, grew darker with anger, he advised the Jew to remember that all the wealth he had acquired by sucking the blood of his miserable victims had but swelled him like a bloated spider, which might be overlooked while it kept in a corner, but would be crushed if it ventured into the light. This intimation, delivered in Norman-English with a firm voice and a stern aspect, made the Jew shrink back; and he would have probably withdrawn himself altogether from a vicinity so dangerous, had not the attention of every one been called to the sudden entrance of Prince John, who at that moment entered the lists, attended by a numerous and gay train, consisting partly of laymen, partly of churchmen, as light in their dress and as gay in their demeanor as their companions. Among the latter was the Prior of Jorvaulx, in the most gallant trim which a dignitary of the church could venture to exhibit. Fur and gold were not spared in his garments; and the points of his boots, out-heroding the preposterous fashion of the time, turned up so very far as to be attached, not to his knees merely, but to his very girdle, and effectually prevented him from putting his foot into the stirrup. This, however, was a slight inconvenience to the gallant abbot, who, perhaps, even rejoicing in the opportunity to display his accomplished horsemanship before so many spectators, especially of the fair sex, dispensed with the use of these supports to a timid rider. The rest of Prince John's retinue consisted of the favorite leaders of his mercenary troops, some marauding barons and prof-

[1] A cloth formerly largely used in England, dyed with especial skill at Lincoln, England; whence its name.

ligate attendants upon the court, with several Knights Templars and Knights of St. John.

Attended by this gallant equipage, himself well mounted, and splendidly dressed in crimson and in gold, bearing upon his hand a falcon, and having his head covered by a rich fur bonnet,[1] adorned with a circle of precious stones, from which his long curled hair escaped and overspread his shoulders, Prince John, upon a gray and high-mettled palfry, caracoled[2] within the lists at the head of his jovial party, laughing loud with his train, and eying with all the boldness of royal criticism the beauties who adorned the lofty galleries.

Those who remarked in the physiognomy of the prince a dissolute audacity, mingled with extreme haughtiness and indifference to the feelings of others, could not yet deny to his countenance that sort of comeliness which belongs to an open set of features, well formed by nature, modeled by art to the usual rules of courtesy, yet so far frank and honest that they seemed as if they disclaimed to conceal the natural workings of the soul. Such an expression is often mistaken for manly frankness, when in truth it arises from reckless indifference, conscious of superiority of birth, of wealth, or of some other adventitious advantage totally unconnected with personal merit. To those who did not think so deeply, and they were the greater number by a hundred to one, the splendor of Prince John's *rheno* (i.e., fur tippet), the richness of his cloak, lined with the most costly sables, his maroquin[3] boots and golden spurs, together with the grace with which he managed his palfrey, were sufficient to merit clamorous applause.

In his joyous caracole round the lists, the attention of the prince was called by the commotion, not yet subsided, which had attended the ambitious movement of Isaac towards the higher places of the assembly. The quick eye of Prince John instantly recognized the Jew, but was much more agreeably attracted by the beautiful daughter of Zion, who, terrified by the tumult, clung close to the arm of her aged father.

[1] A cap. [2] Wheeled. [3] Morocco.

The figure of Rebecca might indeed have compared with the proudest beauties of England, even though it had been judged by as shrewd a connoisseur as Prince John. Her form was exquisitely symmetrical, and was shown to advantage by a sort of Eastern dress, which she wore according to the fashion of the females of her nation. Her turban of yellow silk suited well with the darkness of her complexion. The brilliancy of her eyes; the superb arch of her eyebrows; her well-formed aquiline nose; her teeth, as white as pearl; and the profusion of her sable tresses, which, each arranged in its own little spiral of twisted curls, fell down upon as much of a lovely neck as a simarre[1] of the richest Persian silk, exhibiting flowers in their natural colors embossed upon a purple ground, permitted to be visible, — all these constituted a combination of loveliness which yielded not to the most beautiful of the maidens who surrounded her. It is true, that, of the golden and pearl-studded clasps which closed her vest from the throat to the waist, the three uppermost were left unfastened on account of the heat, which something enlarged the prospect to which we allude. A diamond necklace, with pendants of inestimable value, were by this means also made more conspicuous. The feather of an ostrich fastened in her turban by an agraffe[2] set with brilliants was another distinction of the beautiful Jewess, scoffed and sneered at by the proud dames who sat above her, but secretly envied by those who affected to deride them.

"By the bald scalp of Abraham!" said Prince John, "yonder Jewess must be the very model of perfection. What sayest thou, Prior Aymer? By the temple[3] of the wise king, which our wiser brother Richard proved unable to recover, she is the very bride of the Canticles!"[4]

[1] A light loose robe worn by women.

[2] A clasp.

[3] The Temple of Solomon.

[4] The Book of Canticles, the Songs of Solomon, called Canticles from the translation of the Hebrew "Song of Songs" into *Canticum Canticorum* in the Latin version of the Scriptures.

"The rose of Sharon[1] and the lily of the valley," answered the prior in a sort of snuffling tone; "but your Grace must remember she is still but a Jewess."

"Ay!" added Prince John, without heeding him, "and there is my Mammon[2] of unrighteousness too, — the Marquis of Marks,[3] the Baron of Byzants,[3] contesting for place with penniless dogs whose threadbare cloaks have not a single cross in their pouches to keep the devil from dancing there. By the body of St. Mark, my prince of supplies, with his lovely Jewess, shall have a place in the gallery! — What is she, Isaac, — thy wife, or thy daughter, — that Eastern houri that thou lockest under thy arm as thou wouldst thy treasure-casket?"

"My daughter Rebecca, so please your Grace," answered Isaac with a low congee,[4] nothing embarrassed by the prince's salutation, in which, however, there was at least as much mockery as courtesy.

"The wiser man thou," said John with a peal of laughter, in which his gay followers obsequiously joined. "But, daughter or wife, she should be preferred according to her beauty and thy merits. Who sits above there?" he continued, bending his eye on the gallery. "Saxon churls, lolling at their lazy length! Out upon them! Let them sit close and make room for my prince of usurers and his lovely daughter. I'll make the hinds know they must share the high places of the synagogue with those whom the synagogue properly belongs to."

Those who occupied the gallery to whom this injurious and unpolite speech was addressed were the family of Cedric the Saxon, with that of his ally and kinsman Athelstane of Coningsburgh, — a personage who, on account of his descent from the last

[1] A plain celebrated for its beauty, stretching along the shore of the Mediterranean south of Mount Carmel from Cæsarea to Joppa (Song of Sol. ii. 1).

[2] A Syriac word meaning riches.

[3] The mark and the byzants were coins. John's meaning is that the Jew was lord of a fortune.

[4] Bow of courtesy.

Saxon monarchs of England, was held in the highest respect by all the Saxon natives of the north of England. But with the blood of this ancient royal race, many of their infirmities had descended to Athelstane. He was comely in countenance, bulky and strong in person, and in the flower of his age, yet inanimate in expression, dull-eyed, heavy-browed, inactive and sluggish in all his motions, and so slow in resolution that the soubriquet[1] of one of his ancestors was conferred upon him, and he was very generally called Athelstane the Unready. His friends — and he had many, who, as well as Cedric, were passionately attached to him — contended that this sluggish temper arose not from want of courage, but from mere want of decision.

It was to this person, such as we have described him, that the prince addressed his imperious command to make place for Isaac and Rebecca. Athelstane, utterly confounded at an order which the manners and feelings of the times rendered so injuriously insulting, unwilling to obey, yet undetermined how to resist, opposed only the *vis inertiæ*[2] to the will of John, and without stirring, or making any motion whatever of obedience, opened his large gray eyes, and stared at the prince with an astonishment which had in it something extremely ludicrous. But the impatient John regarded it in no such light.

"The Saxon porker," he said, "is either asleep or minds me not. — Prick him with your lance, De Bracy," speaking to a knight who rode near him, the leader of a band of Free Companions, or Condottieri; that is, of mercenaries[3] belonging to no particular nation, but attached for the time to any prince by whom they were paid. There was a murmur even among the attendants of Prince John; but De Bracy, whose profession freed him from all scruples, extended his long lance over the space

[1] An assumed name; a nickname.

[2] Literally, the force of inaction; that is, the resistance of a sluggish temperament.

[3] Hirelings; soldiers who served for hire; from the Latin *mercenarius* ("serving for pay").

which separated the gallery from the lists, and would have executed the commands of the prince before Athelstane the Unready had recovered presence of mind sufficient even to draw back his person from the weapon, had not Cedric, as prompt as his companion was tardy, unsheathed with the speed of lightning the short sword which he wore, and at a single blow severed the point of the lance from the handle. The blood rushed into the countenance of Prince John. He swore one of his deepest oaths, and was about to utter some threat corresponding in violence, when he was diverted from his purpose, partly by his own attendants, who gathered around him, conjuring him to be patient, partly by a general exclamation of the crowd, uttered in loud applause of the spirited conduct of Cedric. The prince rolled his eyes in indignation, as if to collect some safe and easy victim; and chancing to encounter the firm glance of the same archer whom we have already noticed, and who seemed to persist in his gesture of applause in spite of the frowning aspect which the prince bent upon him, he demanded his reason for clamoring thus.

"I always add my hollo," said the yeoman, "when I see a good shot or a gallant blow."

"Sayst thou?" answered the prince; "then thou canst hit the white[1] thyself, I'll warrant."

"A woodsman's mark, and at woodsman's distance, I can hit," answered the yeoman.

"And Wat Tyrrel's[2] mark at a hundred yards," said a voice from behind, but by whom uttered could not be discerned.

This allusion to the fate of William Rufus, his relative, at once incensed and alarmed Prince John. He satisfied himself, however, with commanding the men-at-arms who surrounded the lists to keep an eye on the braggart, pointing to the yeoman.

[1] The bull's-eye of the target.

[2] Sir Walter Tyrrel is generally accredited with having accidentally killed William Rufus (William II., King of England 1087–1100) with an arrow while hunting in New Forest.

"By St. Grizzel!" he added, "we will try his own skill, who is so ready to give his voice to the feats of others."

"I shall not fly the trial," said the yeoman with the composure which marked his whole deportment.

"Meanwhile stand up, ye Saxon churls," said the fiery prince; "for by the light of Heaven, since I have said it, the Jew shall have his seat amongst ye!"

"By no means, an it please your Grace! It is not fit for such as we to sit with the rulers of the land," said the Jew, whose ambition for precedence, though it had led him to dispute place with the extenuated and impoverished descendant of the line of Montdidier, by no means stimulated him to an intrusion upon the privileges of the wealthy Saxons.

"Up, infidel dog, when I command you!" said Prince John, "or I will have thy swarthy hide stripped off and tanned for horse-furniture."[1]

Thus urged, the Jew began to ascend the steep and narrow steps which led up to the gallery.

"Let me see," said the prince, "who dare stop him," fixing his eye on Cedric, whose attitude intimated his intention to hurl the Jew down headlong.

The catastrophe was prevented by the clown Wamba, who, springing betwixt his master and Isaac, and exclaiming in answer to the prince's defiance, "Marry, that will I!" opposed to the beard of the Jew a shield of brawn,[2] which he plucked from beneath his cloak, and with which, doubtless, he had furnished himself lest the tournament should have proved longer than his appetite could endure abstinence. Finding the abomination of his tribe opposed to his very nose, while the Jester, at the same time, flourished his wooden sword above his head, the Jew recoiled, missed his footing, and rolled down the steps,—an excellent jest to the spectators, who set up a loud laughter, in which Prince John and his attendants heartily joined.

[1] Accouterments of a horse, covering, etc.

[2] Flesh of a boar or of swine; pork.

"Deal me the prize, cousin prince," said Wamba. "I have vanquished my foe in fair fight with sword and shield," he added, brandishing the brawn in one hand, and the wooden sword in the other.

"Who and what art thou, noble champion?" said Prince John, still laughing.

"A fool by right of descent," answered the Jester. "I am Wamba, the son of Witless, who was the son of Weatherbrain, who was the son of an alderman."[1]

"Make room for the Jew in front of the lower ring," said Prince John, not unwilling, perhaps, to seize an apology to desist from his original purpose. "To place the vanquished beside the victor were false heraldry."

"Knave upon fool were worse," answered the Jester, "and Jew upon bacon worst of all."

"Gramercy! good fellow," cried Prince John, "thou pleasest me. — Here, Isaac, lend me a handful of byzants."

As the Jew, stunned by the request, afraid to refuse, and unwilling to comply, fumbled in the furred bag which hung by his girdle, and was perhaps endeavoring to ascertain how few coins might pass for a handful, the prince stooped from his jennet, and settled Isaac's doubts by snatching the pouch itself from his side; and, flinging to Wamba a couple of the gold pieces which it contained, he pursued his career round the lists, leaving the Jew to the derision of those around him, and himself receiving as much applause from the spectators as if he had done some honest and honorable action.

[1] Or ealdorman; among the Saxons designating, in a general sense, high dignitaries of state and the nobility; in a specific sense, officers of national, county, and municipal jurisdiction, whose duties seem to have been chiefly of a judicial character, though not clearly defined.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN the midst of Prince John's cavalcade he suddenly stopped, and, appealing to the Prior of Jorvaulx, declared the principal business of the day had been forgotten.

"By my halidom!"[1] said he, "we have forgotten, Sir Prior, to name the fair Sovereign of Love and of Beauty, by whose white hand the palm is to be distributed. For my part, I am liberal in my ideas, and I care not if I give my vote for the black-eyed Rebecca."

"Holy Virgin!" answered the prior, turning up his eyes in horror, "a Jewess! We should deserve to be stoned out of the lists; and I am not yet old enough to be a martyr. Besides, I swear by my patron saint that she is far inferior to the lovely Saxon, Rowena."

"Saxon or Jew," answered the prince, "Saxon or Jew, dog or hog, what matters it? I say, name Rebecca, were it only to mortify the Saxon churls."

A murmur arose even among his own immediate attendants.

"This passes a jest, my lord," said De Bracy. "No knight here will lay lance in rest[2] if such an insult is attempted."

"It is the mere wantonness of insult," said one of the oldest and most important of Prince John's followers, Waldemar Fitzurse, "and, if your Grace attempt it, cannot but prove ruinous to your projects."

"I entertained you, sir," said John, reining up his palfrey haughtily, "for my follower, but not for my counselor."

"Those who follow your Grace in the paths which you tread,"

[1] Anglo-Saxon, *halig* ("holy"); *dom*, the termination of nouns, denoting quality, condition, etc.: hence holiness, sacred honor, any sacred relic on which oaths were sworn.

[2] A kind of hook fastened to the cuirass, or armor about the waist, for supporting the lance in a charge.

said Waldemar, but speaking in a low voice, "acquire the right of counselors; for your interest and safety are not more deeply engaged than their own."

From the tone in which this was spoken, John saw the necessity of acquiescence. "I did but jest," he said; "and you turn upon me like so many adders! Name whom you will, and please yourselves."

"Nay, nay," said De Bracy; "let the fair sovereign's throne remain unoccupied until the conqueror shall be named, and then let him choose the lady by whom it shall be filled. It will add another grace to his triumph, and teach fair ladies to prize the love of valiant knights who can exalt them to such distinction."

"If Brian de Bois-Guilbert gain the prize," said the prior, "I will gage[1] my rosary[2] that I name the Sovereign of Love and Beauty."

"Bois-Guilbert," answered De Bracy, "is a good lance; but there are others around these lists, Sir Prior, who will not fear to encounter him."

"Silence, sirs," said Waldemar, "and let the prince assume his seat. The knights and spectators are alike impatient, the time advances, and highly fit it is that the sports should commence."

Prince John, though not yet a monarch, had in Waldemar Fitzurse all the inconveniences of a favorite minister, who, in serving his sovereign, must always do so in his own way. The prince acquiesced, however, although his disposition was precisely of that kind which is apt to be obstinate upon trifles, and assuming his throne, and being surrounded by his followers, gave signal to the heralds to proclaim the laws of the tournament, which were briefly as follows: —

First, the five challengers were to undertake all comers.

Secondly, any knight proposing to combat might, if he pleased, select a special antagonist from among the challengers by touching his shield. If he did so with the reverse of his lance, the trial of skill was made with what were called the arms of cour-

[1] Wager. [2] A string of beads used in prayer.

tesy; that is, with lances at whose extremity a piece of round flat board was fixed, so that no danger was encountered, save from the shock of the horses and riders. But if the shield was touched with the sharp end of the lance, the combat was understood to be at *outrance;* that is, the knights were to fight with sharp weapons, as in actual battle.

Thirdly, when the knights present had accomplished their vow by each of them breaking five lances, the prince was to declare the victor in the first day's tourney, who should receive as prize a war-horse of exquisite beauty and matchless strength; and in addition to this reward of valor, it was now declared, he should have the peculiar honor of naming the Queen of Love and Beauty, by whom the prize should be given on the ensuing day.

Fourthly, it was announced that on the second day there should be a general tournament, in which all the knights present who were desirous to win praise might take part, and, being divided into two bands of equal numbers, might fight it out manfully, until the signal was given by Prince John to cease the combat. The elected Queen of Love and Beauty was then to crown the knight whom the prince should adjudge to have borne himself best in this second day, with a coronet composed of thin gold plate cut into the shape of a laurel crown. On this second day the knightly games ceased; but on that which was to follow, feats of archery, of bull-baiting,[1] and other popular amusements, were to be practiced for the more immediate amusement of the populace. In this manner did Prince John endeavor to lay the foundation of a popularity which he was perpetually throwing down by some inconsiderate act of wanton aggression upon the feelings and prejudices of the people.

The lists now presented a most splendid spectacle. The sloping galleries were crowded with all that was noble, great, wealthy, and beautiful in the northern and midland parts of England; and the contrast of the various dresses of these dignified spectators rendered the view as gay as it was rich, while the interior

[1] The practice of worrying a bull with dogs.

and lower space, filled with the substantial burgesses and yeomen of merry England, formed, in their more plain attire, a dark fringe or border around this circle of brilliant embroidery, relieving and at the same time setting off its splendor.

The heralds finished their proclamation with their usual cry of "Largesse, largesse, gallant knights!" and gold and silver pieces were showered on them from the galleries, it being a high point of chivalry to exhibit liberality towards those whom the age accounted at once the secretaries and the historians of honor. The bounty of the spectators was acknowledged by the customary shouts of "Love of ladies! Death of champions! Honor to the generous! Glory to the brave!" to which the more humble spectators added their acclamations, and a numerous band of trumpeters the flourish[1] of their martial instruments. When these sounds had ceased, the heralds withdrew from the lists in gay and glittering procession, and none remained within them save the marshals of the field, who, armed *cap-a-pie*,[2] sat on horseback, motionless as statues, at the opposite ends of the lists. Meantime the inclosed space at the northern extremity of the lists, large as it was, was now completely crowded with knights desirous to prove their skill against the challengers, and, when viewed from the galleries, presented the appearance of a sea of waving plumage, intermixed with glistening helmets and tall lances, to the extremities of which were in many cases attached small pennons of about a span's breadth, which, fluttering in the air as the breeze caught them, joined with the restless motion of the feathers to add liveliness to the scene.

At length the barriers were opened, and five knights, chosen by lot, advanced slowly into the area; a single champion riding in front, and the other four following in pairs.

The champions advanced through the lists, restraining their fiery steeds, and compelling them to move slowly, while at the same time they exhibited their paces, together with the grace and dexterity of the riders. As the procession entered the lists,

[1] A call upon the trumpets. [2] From head to foot.

the sound of a wild, barbaric music was heard from behind the tents of the challengers, where the performers were concealed. It was of Eastern origin, having been brought from the Holy Land; and the mixture of the cymbals and bells seemed to bid welcome at once, and defiance, to the knights as they advanced. With the eyes of an immense concourse of spectators fixed upon them, the five knights advanced up the platform upon which the tents of the challengers stood, and, there separating themselves, each touched slightly, and with the reverse of his lance, the shield of the antagonist to whom he wished to oppose himself.

Having intimated their more pacific purpose, the champions retreated to the extremity of the lists, where they remained drawn up in a line; while the challengers, sallying each from his pavilion, mounted their horses, and, headed by Brian de Bois-Guilbert, descended from the platform, and opposed themselves individually to the knights who had touched their respective shields.

At the flourish of clarions and trumpets, they started out against each other at full gallop; and such was the superior dexterity or good fortune of the challengers, that those opposed to Bois-Guilbert, Malvoisin, and Front-de-Bœuf, rolled on the ground. The antagonist of Grantmesnil, instead of bearing his lance-point fair against the crest[1] or the shield of his enemy, swerved so much from the direct line as to break the weapon athwart the person of his opponent, — a circumstance which was accounted more disgraceful than that of being actually unhorsed; because the latter might happen from accident, whereas the former evinced awkwardness, and want of management of the weapon and of the horse. The fifth knight alone maintained the honor of his party, and parted fairly with the Knight of St. John, both splintering their lances without advantage on either side.

The shouts of the multitude, together with the acclamations of the heralds and the clangor of the trumpets, announced the triumph of the victors and the defeat of the vanquished. The

[1] The plume or ridge of a helmet.

former retreated to their pavilions; and the latter, gathering themselves up as they could, withdrew from the lists in disgrace and dejection, to agree with their victors concerning the redemption of their arms and their horses, which, according to the laws of the tournament, they had forfeited. The fifth of their number alone tarried in the lists long enough to be greeted by the applauses of the spectators, amongst whom he retreated, to the aggravation, doubtless, of his companions' mortification.

A second and a third party of knights took the field; and although they had various success, yet upon the whole the advantage decidedly remained with the challengers, not one of whom lost his seat or swerved from his charge,— misfortunes which befell one or two of their antagonists in each encounter. The spirits, therefore, of those opposed to them seemed to be considerably damped by their continued success. Three knights only appeared on the fourth entry, who, avoiding the shields of Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Bœuf, contented themselves with touching those of the three other knights, who had not altogether manifested the same strength and dexterity. This politic selection did not alter the fortune of the field: the challengers were still successful. One of their antagonists was overthrown, and both the others failed in the *attaint;*[1] that is, in striking the helmet and shield of their antagonist firmly and strongly, with the lance held in a direct line, so that the weapon might break unless the champion was overthrown.

After this fourth encounter there was a considerable pause; nor did it appear that any one was very desirous of renewing the contest. The spectators murmured among themselves: for, among the challengers, Malvoisin and Front-de-Bœuf were unpopular from their characters; and the others, except Grantmesnil, were disliked as strangers and foreigners.

The pause in the tournament was still uninterrupted, excepting by the voices of the heralds exclaiming, "Love of ladies, splinter-

[1] This term of chivalry, transferred to the law, gives the phrase of being attainted of treason.

ing of lances! Stand forth, gallant knights! Fair eyes, look upon your deeds!"

The music also of the challengers breathed from time to time wild bursts expressive of triumph or defiance, while the clowns grudged a holiday which seemed to pass away in inactivity; and old knights and nobles lamented in whispers the decay of martial spirit, spoke of the triumphs of their younger days, but agreed that the land did not now supply dames of such transcendent beauty as had animated the jousts[1] of former times. Prince John began to talk to his attendants about making ready the banquet, and the necessity of adjudging the prize to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had, with a single spear, overthrown two knights and foiled a third.

At length, as the Saracenic music of the challengers concluded one of those long and high flourishes with which they had broken the silence of the lists, it was answered by a solitary trumpet, which breathed a note of defiance from the northern extremity. All eyes were turned to see the new champion which these sounds announced, and no sooner were the barriers opened than he paced into the lists. As far as could be judged of a man sheathed in armor, the new adventurer did not greatly exceed the middle size, and seemed to be rather slender than strongly made. His suit of armor was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold; and the device on his shield was a young oak-tree pulled up by the roots, with the Spanish word *desdichado*, signifying "disinherited." He was mounted on a gallant black horse, and as he passed through the lists he gracefully saluted the prince and the ladies by lowering his lance. The dexterity with which he managed his steed, and something of youthful grace which he displayed in his manner, won him the favor of the multitude, which some of the lower classes expressed by calling out, "Touch Ralph de Vipont's shield! Touch the Hospitaler's shield! He has the least sure seat, he is your cheapest bargain."

The champion, moving onward amid these well-meant hints,

[1] Tilting-matches.

ascended the platform by the sloping alley which led to it from the lists, and to the astonishment of all present, riding straight up to the central pavilion, struck with the sharp end of his spear the shield of Brian de Bois-Guilbert until it rung again. All stood astonished at his presumption, but none more than the redoubted[1] knight whom he had thus defied to mortal combat, and who, little expecting so rude a challenge, was standing carelessly at the door of the pavilion.

"Have you confessed yourself, brother," said the Templar, "and have you heard mass this morning, that you peril your life so frankly?"

"I am fitter to meet death than thou art," answered the Disinherited Knight; for by this name the stranger had recorded himself in the books of the tourney.

"Then take your place in the lists," said Bois-Guilbert, "and look your last upon the sun; for this night thou shalt sleep in Paradise."

"Gramercy for thy courtesy," replied the Disinherited Knight; "and to requite it, I advise thee to take a fresh horse and a new lance, for, by my honor, you will need both."

Having expressed himself thus confidently, he reined his horse backward down the slope which he had ascended, and compelled him in the same manner to move backward through the lists, till he reached the northern extremity, where he remained stationary, in expectation of his antagonist. This feat of horsemanship again attracted the applause of the multitude.

However incensed at his adversary for the precautions which he recommended, Brian de Bois-Guilbert did not neglect his advice; for his honor was too nearly concerned to permit his neglecting any means which might insure victory over his presumptuous opponent. He changed his horse for a proved and fresh one of great strength and spirit. He chose a new and a tough spear, lest the wood of the former might have been strained in the previous encounters he had sustained. Lastly, he laid

[1] Valiant.

aside his shield, which had received some little damage, and received another from his squires. His first had only borne the general device of his rider, representing two knights riding upon one horse, — an emblem expressive of the original humility and poverty of the Templars, qualities which they had since exchanged for the arrogance and wealth that finally occasioned their suppression. Bois-Guilbert's new shield bore a raven in full flight, holding in its claws a skull, and bearing the motto, *Gare le Corbeau.*[1]

When the two champions stood opposed to each other at the two extremities of the lists, the public expectation was strained to the highest pitch. Few augured the possibility that the encounter could terminate well for the Disinherited Knight, yet his courage and gallantry secured the general good wishes of the spectators.

The trumpets had no sooner given the signal than the champions vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the center of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The lances burst into shivers up to the very grasp; and it seemed at the moment that both knights had fallen, for the shock had made each horse recoil backwards upon its haunches. The address[2] of the riders recovered their steeds by use of the bridle and spur; and, having glared on each other for an instant with eyes which seemed to flash fire through the bars of their visors,[3] each made a demivolt, and, retiring to the extremity of the lists, received a fresh lance from the attendants.

A loud shout from the spectators, waving of scarfs and handkerchiefs, and general acclamations, attested the interest taken by the spectators in this encounter, — the most equal, as well as the best performed, which had graced the day. But no sooner had the knights resumed their station than the clamor of ap-

1 "Look out for the Raven!"

2 Skill.

3 The visor was the movable front of the helmet, which, perforated and barred, admitted light and air to the wearer.

plause was hushed into a silence so deep and so dead that it seemed the multitude were afraid even to breathe.

A few minutes' pause having been allowed, that the combatants and their horses might recover breath, Prince John with his truncheon signed to the trumpets to sound the onset. The champions a second time sprung from their stations, and closed in the center of the lists, with the same speed, the same dexterity, the same violence, but not the same equal fortune, as before.

In this second encounter the Templar aimed at the center of his antagonist's shield, and struck it so fair and forcibly that his spear went to shivers, and the Disinherited Knight reeled in his saddle. On the other hand, that champion had, in the beginning of his career, directed the point of his lance towards Bois-Guilbert's shield; but, changing his aim almost in the moment of encounter, he addressed it to the helmet,—a mark more difficult to hit, but which, if attained, rendered the shock more irresistible. Fair and true he hit the Norman on the visor, where his lance's point kept hold of the bars. Yet, even at this disadvantage, the Templar sustained his high reputation; and, had not the girths of his saddle burst, he might not have been unhorsed. As it chanced, however, saddle, horse, and man rolled on the ground under a cloud of dust.

To extricate himself from the stirrups and fallen steed was to the Templar scarce the work of a moment; and stung with madness, both at his disgrace and at the acclamations with which it was hailed by the spectators, he drew his sword, and waved it in defiance of his conqueror. The Disinherited Knight sprung from his steed, and also unsheathed his sword. The marshals of the field, however, spurred their horses between them, and reminded them that the laws of the tournament did not, on the present occasion, permit this species of encounter.

"We shall meet again, I trust," said the Templar, casting a resentful glance at his antagonist, "and where there are none to separate us."

"If we do not," said the Disinherited Knight, "the fault shall

not be mine. On foot or horseback, with spear, with ax, or with sword, I am alike ready to encounter thee."

More and angrier words would have been exchanged, but the marshals, crossing their lances betwixt them, compelled them to separate. The Disinherited Knight returned to his first station, and Bois-Guilbert to his tent, where he remained for the rest of the day in an agony of despair.

Without alighting from his horse, the conqueror called for a bowl of wine, and opening the beaver, or lower part of his helmet, announced that he quaffed it "to all true English hearts, and to the confusion of foreign tyrants." He then commanded his trumpet to sound a defiance to the challengers, and desired a herald to announce to them that he should make no election, but was willing to encounter them in the order in which they pleased to advance against him.

The gigantic Front-de-Bœuf, armed in sable armor, was the first who took the field. He bore on a white shield a black bull's head, half defaced by the numerous encounters which he had undergone, and bearing the arrogant motto, *Cave, adsum.*[1] Over this champion the Disinherited Knight obtained a slight but decisive advantage. Both knights broke their lances fairly; but Front-de-Bœuf, who lost a stirrup in the encounter, was adjudged to have the disadvantage.

In the stranger's third encounter with Sir Philip Malvoisin, he was equally successful, striking that baron so forcibly on the casque[2] that the laces[3] of the helmet broke; and Malvoisin, only saved from falling by being unhelmeted, was declared vanquished like his companions.

In his fourth combat with De Grantmesnil, the Disinherited Knight showed as much courtesy as he had hitherto evinced courage and dexterity. De Grantmesnil's horse, which was young and violent, reared and plunged in the course of the career so as to disturb the rider's aim; and the stranger, declining to take the advantage which this accident afforded him, raised his

[1] "Beware! I am present." [2] A form of helmet. [3] Fastenings.

lance, and, passing his antagonist without touching him, wheeled his horse, and rode back again to his own end of the lists, offering his antagonist, by a herald, the chance of a second encounter. This De Grantmesnil declined, avowing himself vanquished as much by the courtesy as by the address of his opponent.

Ralph de Vipont summed up the list of the stranger's triumphs, being hurled to the ground with such force that the blood gushed from his nose and his mouth, and he was borne senseless from the lists.

The acclamations of thousands applauded the unanimous award of the prince and marshals, announcing that day's honors to the Disinherited Knight.

CHAPTER IX.

WILLIAM DE WYVIL and Stephen de Martival, the marshals of the field, were the first to offer their congratulations to the victor, praying him, at the same time, to suffer his helmet to be unlaced, or, at least, that he would raise his visor ere they conducted him to receive the prize of the day's tourney from the hands of Prince John. The Disinherited Knight, with all knightly courtesy, declined their request, alleging that he could not at this time suffer his face to be seen, for reasons which he had assigned to the heralds when he entered the lists. The marshals were perfectly satisfied by this reply; for, amidst the frequent and capricious vows by which knights were accustomed to bind themselves in the days of chivalry, there were none more common than those by which they engaged to remain incognito for a certain space, or until some particular adventure was achieved. The marshals, therefore, pressed no further into the mystery of the Disinherited Knight, but, announcing to Prince John the conqueror's desire to remain unknown, they requested permission to bring him before his Grace, in order that he might receive the reward of his valor.

John's curiosity was excited by the mystery observed by the stranger; and, being already displeased with the issue of the tournament, in which the challengers whom he favored had been successively defeated by one knight, he answered haughtily to the marshals, "By the light of Our Lady's brow, this same knight hath been disinherited as well of his courtesy as of his lands, since he desires to appear before us without uncovering his face. —Wot[1] ye, my lords," he said, turning round to his train, "who this gallant can be, that bears himself thus proudly?"

"I cannot guess," answered De Bracy, "nor did I think there had been within the four seas that girth[2] Britain a champion that could bear down these five knights in one day's jousting. By my faith, I shall never forget the force with which he shocked De Vipont. The poor Hospitaler was hurled from his saddle like a stone from a sling."

"Boast not of that," said a Knight of St. John who was present; "your Temple champion had no better luck. I saw your brave lance, Bois-Guilbert, roll thrice over, grasping his hands full of sand at every turn."

De Bracy, being attached to the Templars, would have replied, but was prevented by Prince John. "Silence, sirs!" he said, "what unprofitable debate have we here?"

"The victor," said De Wyvil, "still waits the pleasure of your Highness."

"It is our pleasure," answered John, "that he do so wait until we learn whether there is not some one who can at least guess at his name and quality. Should he remain there till nightfall, he has had work enough to keep him warm."

"Your Grace," said Waldemar Fitzurse, "will do less than due honor to the victor, if you compel him to wait till we tell your Highness that which we cannot know; at least, *I* can form no guess — unless he be one of the good lances who accompanied King Richard to Palestine, and who are now straggling homeward from the Holy Land."

[1] Know. [2] Encircle.

"It may be the Earl of Salisbury," said De Bracy; "he is about the same pitch."[1]

"Sir Thomas de Multon, the Knight of Gilsland, rather," said Fitzurse. "Salisbury is bigger in the bones." A whisper arose among the train, but by whom first suggested could not be ascertained. "It might be the King — it might be Richard Cœur-de-Lion himself!"

"Over gods forbode!"[2] said Prince John, involuntarily turning at the same time as pale as death, and shrinking as if blighted by a flash of lightning. "Waldemar! De Bracy! brave knights and gentlemen, remember your promises, and stand truly by me!"

"Here is no danger impending," said Waldemar Fitzurse. "Are you so little acquainted with the gigantic limbs of your father's son as to think they can be held within the circumference of yonder suit of armor? — De Wyvil and Martival, you will best serve the prince by bringing forward the victor to the throne, and ending an error that has conjured all the blood from his cheeks. — Look at him more closely," he continued; "your Highness will see that he wants three inches of King Richard's height, and twice as much of his shoulder-breadth. The very horse he backs could not have carried the ponderous weight of King Richard through a single course."

While he was yet speaking, the marshals brought forward the Disinherited Knight to the foot of a wooden flight of steps, which formed the ascent from the lists to Prince John's throne. Still discomposed with the idea that his brother, so much injured, and to whom he was so much indebted, had suddenly arrived in his native kingdom, even the distinctions pointed out by Fitzurse did not altogether remove the prince's apprehensions; and while, with a short and embarrassed eulogy upon his valor, he caused to be delivered to him the war-horse assigned as the prize, he trembled lest from the barred visor of the mailed form before him an answer might be returned in the deep and awful accents of Richard the Lion-hearted.

[1] Stature. [2] Forbid.

But the Disinherited Knight spoke not a word in reply to the compliment of the prince, which he only acknowledged with a profound obeisance.

The horse was led into the lists by two grooms richly dressed, the animal itself being fully accoutered with the richest war-furniture; which, however, scarcely added to the value of the noble creature in the eyes of those who were judges. Laying one hand upon the pommel of the saddle, the Disinherited Knight vaulted at once upon the back of the steed without making use of the stirrup, and, brandishing aloft his lance, rode twice around the lists, exhibiting the points and paces of the horse with the skill of a perfect horseman.

The appearance of vanity which might otherwise have been attributed to this display was removed by the propriety shown in exhibiting to the best advantage the princely reward with which he had been just honored, and the knight was again greeted by the acclamations of all present.

In the mean while the bustling Prior of Jorvaulx had reminded Prince John in a whisper that the victor must now display his good judgment, instead of his valor, by selecting from among the beauties who graced the galleries a lady who should fill the throne of the Queen of Beauty and of Love, and deliver the prize of the tourney upon the ensuing day. The prince accordingly made a sign with his truncheon as the knight passed him in his second career around the lists. The knight turned towards the throne, and, sinking his lance until the point was within a foot of the ground, remained motionless, as if expecting John's commands; while all admired the sudden dexterity with which he instantly reduced his fiery steed from a state of violent emotion and high excitation to the stillness of an equestrian statue.

"Sir Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since that is the only title by which we can address you, it is now your duty, as well as privilege, to name the fair lady who, as Queen of Honor and of Love, is to preside over next day's festival. If, as a stranger in our land, you should require the aid of other judgment to

guide your own, we can only say that Alicia, the daughter of our gallant knight Waldemar Fitzurse, has at our court been long held the first in beauty as in place. Nevertheless it is your undoubted prerogative to confer on whom you please this crown, by the delivery of which to the lady of your choice the election of to-morrow's queen will be formal and complete. Raise your lance."

The knight obeyed; and Prince John placed upon its point a coronet of green satin, having around its edge a circlet of gold, the upper edge of which was relieved by arrow-points and hearts placed interchangeably, like the strawberry leaves and balls upon a ducal crown.

In the broad hint which he dropped respecting the daughter of Waldemar Fitzurse, John had more than one motive, each the offspring of a mind which was a strange mixture of carelessness and presumption with low artifice and cunning. He wished to banish from the minds of the chivalry around him his own unacceptable jest respecting the Jewess Rebecca; he was desirous of conciliating Alicia's father Waldemar, of whom he stood in awe, and who had more than once shown himself dissatisfied during the course of the day's proceedings; but, besides all these reasons, he was desirous to raise up against the Disinherited Knight (towards whom he already entertained a strong dislike) a powerful enemy in the person of Waldemar Fitzurse, who was likely, he thought, highly to resent the injury done to his daughter, in case, as was not unlikely, the victor should make another choice.

And so indeed it proved: for the Disinherited Knight passed the gallery close to that of the prince, in which the Lady Alicia was seated in the full pride of triumphant beauty; and, pacing forwards as slowly as he had hitherto rode swiftly around the lists, he seemed to exercise his right of examining the numerous fair faces which adorned that splendid circle.

It was worth while to see the different conduct of the beauties who underwent this examination, during the time it was proceeding. Some blushed; some assumed an air of pride and dignity; some looked straight forward, and essayed to seem utterly un-

conscious of what was going on; some drew back in alarm, which was perhaps affected; some endeavored to forbear smiling; and there were two or three who laughed outright. There were also some who dropped their veils.

At length the champion paused beneath the balcony on which the Lady Rowena was placed, and the expectation of the spectators was excited to the utmost.

It must be owned, that, if an interest displayed in his success could have bribed the Disinherited Knight, the part of the lists before which he paused had merited his predilection. Cedric the Saxon, overjoyed at the discomfiture of the Templar, and still more so at the miscarriage of his two malevolent neighbors, Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, had, with his body half stretched over the balcony, accompanied the victor in each course, not with his eyes only, but with his whole heart and soul. The Lady Rowena had watched the progress of the day with equal attention, though without openly betraying the same intense interest. Even the unmoved Athelstane had shown symptoms of shaking off his apathy, when, calling for a huge goblet of muscadine,[1] he quaffed it to the health of the Disinherited Knight.

Another group, stationed under the gallery occupied by the Saxons, had shown no less interest in the fate of the day.

"Father Abraham!" said Isaac of York, when the first course was run betwixt the Templar and the Disinherited Knight, "how fiercely that Gentile rides! Ah, the good horse that was brought all the long way from Barbary, he takes no more care of him than if he were a wild ass's colt; and the noble armor, that was worth so many zecchins[2] to Joseph Pareira, the armorer of Milan, besides seventy in the hundred of profits, he cares for it as little as if he had found it in the highways!"

"If he risks his own person and limbs, father," said Rebecca, "in doing such a dreadful battle, he can scarce be expected to spare his horse and armor."

[1] Wine from muscat grapes.

[2] A zecchin is a gold coin of Venice, worth about two dollars and a quarter.

"Child!" replied Isaac, somewhat heated, "thou knowest not what thou speakest. His neck and limbs are his own, but his horse and armor belong to— Holy Jacob! what was I about to say! Nevertheless, it is a good youth. See, Rebecca! see, he is again about to go up to battle against the Philistine. Pray, child, pray for the safety of the good youth, and of the speedy horse and the rich armor. God of my fathers!" he again exclaimed, "he hath conquered, and the Philistine hath fallen before his lance; even as Og[1], the King of Bashan,[2] and Sihon,[3] King of the Amorites,[4] fell before the sword of our fathers! Surely he shall take their gold and their silver, and their war-horses, and their armor of brass and of steel, for a prey and for a spoil."

The same anxiety did the worthy Jew display during every course that was run, seldom failing to hazard a hasty calculation concerning the value of the horse and armor which was forfeited to the champion upon each new success. There had been, therefore, no small interest taken in the success of the Disinherited Knight by those who occupied the part of the lists before which he now paused.

Whether from indecision or some other motive of hesitation, the champion of the day remained stationary for more than a minute, while the eyes of the silent audience were riveted upon his motions; and then, gradually and gracefully sinking the point of his lance, he deposited the coronet which it supported at the feet of the fair Rowena. The trumpets instantly sounded, while the heralds proclaimed the Lady Rowena the Queen of Beauty

[1] The king, of giant stature, who opposed the passage of the Israelites through his territory (see Deut. iii. 11).

[2] A district east of the Jordan, between the mountains of Hermon on the north and those of Gilead on the south. Its modern name is Bantanea.

[3] He lost his dominions from refusing passage to the Hebrews on their march from Egypt to Canaan. He was killed in battle, and Heshbon, his capital, seized, and his land parceled out among the Israelites (see Num. xxi. 21–31).

[4] A Syrian tribe of gigantic stature.

and of Love for the ensuing day, menacing with suitable penalties those who should be disobedient to her authority. They then repeated their cry of "Largesse!" to which Cedric, in the height of his joy, replied by an ample donative; and to which Athelstane, though less promptly, added one equally large.

There was some murmuring among the damsels of Norman descent, who were as much unused to see the preference given to a Saxon beauty as the Norman nobles were to sustain defeat in the games of chivalry which they themselves had introduced. But these sounds of disaffection were drowned by the popular shout of "Long live the Lady Rowena, the chosen and lawful Queen of Love and of Beauty!" to which many in the lower area added, "Long live the Saxon princess! Long live the race of the immortal Alfred!"

However unacceptable these sounds might be to Prince John and to those around him, he saw himself, nevertheless, obliged to confirm the nomination of the victor, and accordingly, calling to horse, he left his throne, and mounting his jennet, accompanied by his train, he again entered the lists. The prince paused a moment beneath the gallery of the Lady Alicia, to whom he paid his compliments, observing, at the same time, to those around him, "By my halidom, sirs, if the knight's feats in arms have shown that he hath limbs and sinews, his choice hath no less proved that his eyes are none of the clearest."

It was on this occasion, as during his whole life, John's misfortune not perfectly to understand the characters of those whom he wished to conciliate. Waldemar Fitzurse was rather offended than pleased at the prince stating thus broadly an opinion that his daughter had been slighted.

"I know no right of chivalry," he said, "more precious or inalienable than that of each free knight to choose his lady-love by his own judgment. My daughter courts distinction from no one, and in her own character, and in her own sphere, will never fail to receive the full proportion of that which is her due."

Prince John replied not; but spurring his horse, as if to give

vent to his vexation, he made the animal bound forward to the gallery where Rowena was seated, with the crown still at her feet.

"Assume," he said, "fair lady, the mark of your sovereignty, to which none vows homage more sincerely than ourself, John of Anjou; and if it please you to-day, with your noble sire and friends, to grace our banquet in the Castle of Ashby, we shall learn to know the empress to whose service we devote to-morrow."

Rowena remained silent, and Cedric answered for her in his native Saxon.

"The Lady Rowena," he said, "possesses not the language in which to reply to your courtesy, or to sustain her part in your festival. I also, and the noble Athelstane of Coningsburgh, speak only the language, and practice only the manners, of our fathers. We therefore decline with thanks your Highness's courteous invitation to the banquet. To-morrow the Lady Rowena will take upon her the state to which she has been called by the free election of the victor knight, confirmed by the acclamations of the people."

So saying, he lifted the coronet, and placed it upon Rowena's head, in token of her acceptance of the temporary authority assigned to her.

"What says he?" said Prince John, affecting not to understand the Saxon language, in which, however, he was well skilled. The purport of Cedric's speech was repeated to him in French. "It is well," he said; "to-morrow we will ourself conduct this mute sovereign to her seat of dignity. — You, at least, Sir Knight," he added, turning to the victor, who had remained near the gallery, "will this day share our banquet?"

The knight, speaking for the first time in a low and hurried voice, excused himself by pleading fatigue, and the necessity of preparing for to-morrow's encounter.

"It is well," said Prince John haughtily. "Although unused to such refusals, we will endeavor to digest our banquet as we may,

though ungraced by the most successful in arms, and his elected Queen of Beauty."

So saying, he prepared to leave the lists with his glittering train, and his turning his steed for that purpose was the signal for the breaking-up and dispersion of the spectators.

Yet, with the vindictive memory proper to offended pride, especially when combined with conscious want of desert, John had hardly proceeded three paces, ere again, turning around, he fixed an eye of stern resentment upon the yeoman who had displeased him in the early part of the day, and issued his commands to the men-at-arms who stood near: "On your life, suffer not that fellow to escape."

The yeoman stood the angry glance of the prince with the same unvaried steadiness which had marked his former deportment, saying with a smile, "I have no intention to leave Ashby until the day after to-morrow. I must see how Staffordshire and Leicestershire can draw their bows. The forests of Needwood[1] and Charnwood must rear good archers."

"I," said Prince John to his attendants, but not in direct reply —"I will see how he can draw his own; and woe betide him unless his skill should prove some apology for his insolence!"

"It is full time," said De Bracy, "that the *outrecuidance*[2] of these peasants should be restrained by some striking example."

Waldemar Fitzurse, who probably thought his patron was not taking the readiest road to popularity, shrugged up his shoulders, and was silent. Prince John resumed his retreat from the lists, and the dispersion of the multitude became general.

[1] This old-time royal forest of Staffordshire still shows excellent remains of forest scenery.

[2] Presumption; insolence.

CHAPTER X.

THE Disinherited Knight had no sooner reached his pavilion than squires and pages in abundance tendered their services to disarm him, to bring fresh attire, and to offer him the refreshment of the bath. Their zeal on this occasion was perhaps sharpened by curiosity, since every one desired to know who the knight was that had gained so many laurels, yet had refused, even at the command of Prince John, to lift his visor or to name his name. But their officious inquisitiveness was not gratified. The Disinherited Knight refused all other assistance save that of his own squire, or rather yeoman, — a clownish-looking man, who, wrapped in a cloak of dark-colored felt, and having his head and face half buried in a Norman bonnet made of black fur, seemed to affect the incognito[1] as much as his master. All others being excluded from the tent, this attendant relieved his master from the more burdensome parts of his armor, and placed food and wine before him, which the exertions of the day rendered very acceptable.

The knight had scarcely finished a hasty meal, ere his menial announced to him that five men, each leading a barbed[2] steed, desired to speak with him. The Disinherited Knight had exchanged his armor for the long robe usually worn by those of his condition, which, being furnished with a hood, concealed the features, when such was the pleasure of the wearer, almost as completely as the visor of the helmet itself; but the twilight, which was now fast darkening, would of itself have rendered a disguise unnecessary, unless to persons to whom the face of an individual chanced to be particularly well known.

The Disinherited Knight, therefore, stepped boldly forth to the

[1] From the Latin *in* ("not") and *cognito* ("known"), a name or character assumed in disguise.

[2] Armored.

front of his tent, and found in attendance the squires of the challengers, whom he easily knew by their russet and black dresses, each of whom led his master's charger,[1] loaded with the armor in which he had that day fought.

"According to the laws of chivalry," said the foremost of these men, "I, Baldwin de Oyley, squire to the redoubted knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, make offer to you, styling yourself for the present the Disinherited Knight, of the horse and armor used by the said Brian de Bois-Guilbert in this day's passage of arms, leaving it with your nobleness to retain or to ransom the same, according to your pleasure; for such is the law of arms."

The other squires repeated nearly the same formula, and then stood to await the decision of the Disinherited Knight.

"To you four, sirs," replied the knight, addressing those who had last spoken, "and to your honorable and valiant masters, I have one common reply. Commend me to the noble knights, your masters, and say, I should do ill to deprive them of steeds and arms which can never be used by braver cavaliers. I would I could here end my message to these gallant knights; but being, as I term myself, in truth and earnest, the Disinherited, I must be thus far bound to your masters, that they will, of their courtesy, be pleased to ransom their steeds and armor, since that which I wear I can hardly term mine own."

"We stand commissioned, each of us," answered the squire of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, "to offer a hundred zecchins in ransom of these horses and suits of armor."

"It is sufficient," said the Disinherited Knight. "Half the sum my present necessities compel me to accept: of the remaining half, distribute one moiety[2] among yourselves, sir squires, and divide the other half betwixt the heralds and the pursuivants and minstrels and attendants."

The squires, with cap in hand, and low reverences, expressed their deep sense of a courtesy and generosity not often practiced, at least upon a scale so extensive. The Disinherited Knight then

[1] A battle-horse.

[2] A half part.

addressed his discourse to Baldwin, the squire of Brian de Bois-Guilbert. "From your master," said he, "I will accept neither arms nor ransom. Say to him, in my name, that our strife is not ended — no, not till we have fought as well with swords as with lances, as well on foot as on horseback. To this mortal quarrel he has himself defied me, and I shall not forget the challenge. Meantime let him be assured that I hold him not as one of his companions, with whom I can with pleasure exchange courtesies, but rather as one with whom I stand upon terms of mortal defiance."

"My master," answered Baldwin, "knows how to requite scorn with scorn, and blows with blows, as well as courtesy with courtesy. Since you disdain to accept from him any share of the ransom at which you have rated the arms of the other knights, I must leave his armor and his horse here, being well assured that he will never deign to mount the one or wear the other."

"You have spoken well, good squire," said the Disinherited Knight, "well and boldly, as it beseemeth him to speak who answers for an absent master. Leave not, however, the horse and armor here. Restore them to thy master; or, if he scorns to accept them, retain them, good friend, for thine own use. So far as they are mine, I bestow them upon you freely."

Baldwin made a deep obeisance, and retired with his companions; and the Disinherited Knight entered the pavilion.

"Thus far, Gurth," said he, addressing his attendant, "the reputation of English chivalry hath not suffered in my hands."

"And I," said Gurth, "for a Saxon swineherd, have not ill played the personage of a Norman squire-at-arms."

"Yea, but," answered the Disinherited Knight, "thou hast ever kept me in anxiety lest thy clownish bearing should discover thee."

"Tush!" said Gurth, "I fear discovery from none, saving my playfellow, Wamba the Jester, of whom I could never discover whether he were most knave or fool. Yet I could scarce choose but laugh when my old master passed so near to me, dreaming

all the while that Gurth was keeping his porkers many a mile off, in the thickets and swamps of Rotherwood. If I am discovered"—

"Enough," said the Disinherited Knight, "thou knowest my promise."

"Nay, for that matter," said Gurth, "I will never fail my friend for fear of my skin-cutting. I have a tough hide, that will bear knife or scourge as well as any boar's hide in my herd."

"Trust me, I will requite the risk you run for my love, Gurth," said the knight. "Meanwhile, I pray you to accept these ten pieces of gold."

"I am richer," said Gurth, putting them into his pouch, "than ever was swineherd or bondsman."

"Take this bag of gold to Ashby," continued his master, "and find out Isaac the Jew of York, and let him pay himself for the horse and arms with which his credit supplied me."

"Nay, by St. Dunstan," replied Gurth, "that I will not do."

"How, knave," replied his master, "wilt thou not obey my commands?"

"So they be honest, reasonable, and Christian commands," replied Gurth; "but this is none of these. To suffer the Jew to pay himself would be dishonest, for it would be cheating my master; and unreasonable, for it were the part of a fool; and unchristian, since it would be plundering a believer to enrich an infidel."

"See him contented, however, thou stubborn varlet,"[1] said the Disinherited Knight.

"I will do so," said Gurth, taking the bag under his cloak and leaving the apartment; "and it will go hard," he muttered, "but I content him with one half of his own asking." So saying, he departed, and left the Disinherited Knight to his own perplexed ruminations, which, upon more accounts than it is now possible to communicate to the reader, were of a nature peculiarly agitating and painful.

[1] Fellow. The word also means an attendant upon a knight.

We must now change the scene to the village of Ashby, or rather to a country house in its vicinity belonging to a wealthy Israelite, with whom Isaac, his daughter, and retinue, had taken up their quarters; the Jews, it is well known, being as liberal in exercising the duties of hospitality and charity among their own people as they were alleged to be reluctant and churlish in extending them to those whom they term Gentiles, and whose treatment of them certainly merited little hospitality at their hand.

In an apartment, small indeed, but richly furnished with decorations of an Oriental taste, Rebecca was seated on a heap of embroidered cushions, which, piled along a low platform that surrounded the chamber, served, like the *estrada*[1] of the Spaniards, instead of chairs and stools. She was watching the motions of her father with a look of anxious and filial affection, while he paced the apartment with a dejected mien and disordered step; sometimes clasping his hands together, sometimes casting his eyes to the roof of the apartment, as one who labored under great mental tribulation. "O Jacob!" he exclaimed, "O all ye twelve holy fathers of our tribe! what a losing venture is this for one who hath duly kept every jot and tittle[2] of the law of Moses! Fifty zecchins wrenched from me at one clutch, and by the talons of a tyrant!"

"But, father," said Rebecca, "you seemed to give the gold to Prince John willingly."

"Willingly? The blotch[3] of Egypt upon him! Willingly, saidst thou? Ay, as willingly as when, in the Gulf of Lyons, I flung over my merchandise to lighten the ship, while she labored in the tempest; robed the seething billows in my choice silks; perfumed their briny foam with myrrh and aloes; enriched

[1] A raised portion of the floor of a room.

[2] Jot and tittle: jot, derived from the Hebrew *yod* (Greek, *iota*), is used figuratively to express the smallest trifle; tittle is the diminutive of *tit*, an old English word, signifying also the merest trifle.

[3] An eruptive disease of the skin.

their caverns with gold and silver work! And was not that an hour of unutterable misery, though my own hands made the sacrifice?"

"But it was a sacrifice which Heaven exacted to save our lives," answered Rebecca; "and the God of our fathers has since blessed your store and your gettings."

"Ay," answered Isaac, "but if the tyrant lays hold on them as he did to-day, and compels me to smile while he is robbing me? O daughter! disinherited and wandering as we are, the worst evil which befalls our race is, that, when we are wronged and plundered, all the world laughs around, and we are compelled to suppress our sense of injury, and to smile tamely when we would revenge bravely."

"Think not thus of it, my father," said Rebecca; "we also have advantages. These Gentiles, cruel and oppressive as they are, are in some sort dependent on the dispersed children of Zion,[1] whom they despise and persecute. Without the aid of our wealth, they could neither furnish forth their hosts in war nor their triumphs in peace; and the gold which we lend them returns with increase to our coffers. We are like the herb which flourisheth most when it is most trampled on. Even this day's pageant had not proceeded without the consent of the despised Jew, who furnished the means."

"Daughter," said Isaac, "thou hast harped upon another string of sorrow. The goodly steed and the rich armor, equal to the full profit of my adventure with our Kirjath Jairam of Leicester, — there is a dead loss too; ay, a loss which swallows up the gains of a week; ay, of the space between two sabbaths; and yet it may end better than I now think, for 'tis a good youth."

"Assuredly," said Rebecca, "you shall not repent you of requiting the good deed received of the stranger knight."

"I trust so, daughter," said Isaac, "and I trust too in the

[1] Mount Zion, a hill in Jerusalem, often spoken of as representing the whole city; the entire nation of Jews; the Church of God; heaven.

rebuilding of Zion; but as well do I hope with my own bodily eyes to see the walls and battlements[1] of the new Temple, as to see a Christian, yea, the very best of Christians, repay a debt to a Jew, unless under the awe of the judge and jailer."

So saying, he resumed his discontented walk through the apartment; and Rebecca, perceiving that her attempts at consolation only served to awaken new subjects of complaint, wisely desisted from her unavailing efforts,—a prudential line of conduct; and we recommend to all who set up for comforters and advisers to follow it in the like circumstances.

The evening was now becoming dark, when a Jewish servant entered the apartment, and placed upon the table two silver lamps fed with perfumed oil. The richest wines and the most delicate refreshments were at the same time displayed by another Israelitish domestic on a small ebony table inlaid with silver, for in the interior of their houses the Jews refused themselves no expensive indulgences. At the same time the servant informed Isaac that a Nazarene (so they termed Christians while conversing among themselves) desired to speak with him. He that would live by traffic must hold himself at the disposal of every one claiming business with him. Isaac at once replaced on the table the untasted glass of Greek wine which he had just raised to his lips, and saying hastily to his daughter, "Rebecca, veil thyself," commanded the stranger to be admitted.

Just as Rebecca had dropped over her fine features a screen of silver gauze which reached to her feet, the door opened, and Gurth entered, wrapped in the ample folds of his Norman mantle. His appearance was rather suspicious than prepossessing, especially as, instead of doffing his bonnet, he pulled it still deeper over his rugged brow.

"Art thou Isaac the Jew of York?" said Gurth in Saxon.

"I am," replied Isaac in the same language,—for his traffic had rendered every tongue spoken in Britain familiar to him,—"and who art thou?"

[1] The indented parapet of fortifications.

"That is not to the purpose," answered Gurth.

"As much as my name is to thee," replied Isaac; "for without knowing thine, how can I hold intercourse with thee?"

"Easily," answered Gurth: "I, being to pay money, must know that I deliver it to the right person; thou, who art to receive it, will not, I think, care very greatly by whose hands it is delivered."

"Oh," said the Jew, "you are come to pay moneys? Holy Father Abraham! that altereth our relation to each other. And from whom dost thou bring it?"

"From the Disinherited Knight," said Gurth, "victor in this day's tournament. It is the price of the armor supplied to him by Kirjath Jairam of Leicester on thy recommendation. The steed is restored to thy stable. I desire to know the amount of the sum which I am to pay for the armor."

"I said he was a good youth!" exclaimed Isaac with joyful exultation. "A cup of wine will do thee no harm," he added, filling and handing to the swineherd a richer draught than Gurth had ever before tasted. "And how much money," continued Isaac, "hast thou brought with thee?"

"Holy Virgin!" said Gurth, setting down the cup, "what nectar[1] these unbelieving dogs drink, while true Christians are fain[2] to quaff ale as muddy and thick as the draff[3] we give to hogs! What money have I brought with me?" continued the Saxon, when he had finished this uncivil ejaculation; "even but a small sum, something in hand the whilst. What, Isaac! thou must bear a conscience, though it be a Jewish one."

"Nay, but," said Isaac, "thy master has won goodly steeds and rich armors with the strength of his lance and of his right hand; but 'tis a good youth. The Jew will take these in present payment, and render him back the surplus."

[1] From the Greek *nektar*, the drink of the gods. Ambrosia was their food.

[2] Glad; pleased.

[3] Waste given to swine.

"My master has disposed of them already," said Gurth.

"Ah! that was wrong," said the Jew; "that was the part of a fool. No Christians here could buy so many horses and armor: no Jew except myself would give him half the values. But thou hast a hundred zecchins with thee in that bag," said Isaac, prying under Gurth's cloak; "it is a heavy one."

"I have heads for crossbow bolts[1] in it," said Gurth readily.

"Well, then," said Isaac, panting, and hesitating between habitual love of gain and a new-born desire to be liberal in the present instance, "if I should say that I would take eighty zecchins for the good steed and the rich armor, which leaves me not a guilder's profit, have you money to pay me?"

"Barely," said Gurth, though the sum demanded was more reasonable than he expected, "and it will leave my master nigh penniless. Nevertheless, if such be your least offer, I must be content."

"Fill thyself another goblet of wine," said the Jew. "Ah! eighty zecchins is too little. It leaveth no profit for the usages of the money; and, besides, the good horse may have suffered wrong in this day's encounter. Oh, it was a hard and a dangerous meeting! — man and steed rushing on each other like wild bulls of Bashan! The horse cannot but have had wrong."

"And I say," replied Gurth, "he is sound, wind and limb; and you may see him now in your stable. And I say, over and above, that seventy zecchins is enough for the armor, and I hope a Christian's word is as good as a Jew's. If you will not take seventy, I will carry this bag" (and he shook it till the contents jingled) "back to my master."

[1] The crossbow, brought to Europe by the crusaders, was a decided improvement on the wooden longbow, and was generally made of steel with a peculiar handle, the cord being stretched by a small wheel termed a "gaffle." The bolts, or arrows, were also usually shod with metal. Bows made of iron were termed "ballisters," — a corruption of the Latin word *ballista*, a machine for discharging missiles.

"Nay, nay!" said Isaac; "lay down the talents,[1] — the shekels, the eighty zecchins, — and thou shalt see I will consider thee liberally."

Gurth at length complied; and, telling out eighty zecchins upon the table, the Jew delivered out to him an acquittance for the horse and suit of armor. The Jew's hand trembled for joy as he wrapped up the first seventy pieces of gold. The last ten he told over with much deliberation, pausing, and saying something as he took each piece from the table and dropped it into his purse. It seemed as if his avarice were struggling with his better nature, and compelling him to pouch zecchin after zecchin, while his generosity urged him to restore some part, at least, to his benefactor, or as a donation to his agent. His whole speech ran nearly thus: —

"Seventy-one — seventy-two, thy master is a good youth — seventy-three, an excellent youth — seventy-four, that piece hath been clipt within the ring[2] — seventy-five — and that looketh light of weight — seventy-six — when thy master wants money, let him come to Isaac of York — seventy-seven — that is, with reasonable security." Here he made a considerable pause, and Gurth had good hope that the last three pieces might escape the fate of their comrades; but the enumeration proceeded. "Seventy-eight — thou art a good fellow — seventy-nine — and deserveth something for thyself" —

Here the Jew paused again, and looked at the last zecchin, intending, doubtless, to bestow it upon Gurth. He weighed it upon the tip of his finger, and made it ring by dropping it upon

[1] The talent, among the Hebrews, was a weight of money measure, — for silver, equal to about three thousand shekels; for gold, to about ten thousand. Here, of course, it is used simply as an expression for a large amount.

[2] This expression — "clipt within the ring" — signifies here "cut within the circle of the coin." In former times coin-clipping was comparatively easy to dishonest persons, as the coins were not milled on the edge or uniformly rounded.

the table. Had it rung too flat, or had it felt a hair's-breadth too light, generosity had carried the day; but, unhappily for Gurth, the chime was full and true, the zecchin plump, newly coined, and a grain above weight. Isaac could not find in his heart to part with it, so dropped it into his purse as if in absence of mind, with the words, "Eighty completes the tale, and I trust thy master will reward thee handsomely. Surely," he added, looking earnestly at the bag, "thou hast more coins in that pouch?"

Gurth grinned, which was his nearest approach to a laugh, as he replied, "About the same quantity which thou hast just told over so carefully." He then folded the acquittance, and put it under his cap, adding, "Peril of thy beard, Jew, see that this be full and ample!" He filled himself, unbidden, a third goblet of wine, and left the apartment without ceremony.

"Rebecca," said the Jew, "that Ishmaelite hath gone somewhat beyond me. Nevertheless, his master is a good youth — ay, and I am well pleased that he hath gained shekels of gold and shekels of silver, even by the speed of his horse and by the strength of his lance, which, like that of Goliath the Philistine, might vie with a weaver's beam."

As he turned to receive Rebecca's answer, he observed, that, during his chaffering with Gurth, she had left the apartment unperceived.

In the mean while Gurth had descended the stair, and, having reached the dark antechamber or hall, was puzzling about to discover the entrance, when a figure in white, shown by a small silver lamp which she held in her hand, beckoned him into a side apartment. Gurth had some reluctance to obey the summons. Rough and impetuous as a wild boar where only earthly force was to be apprehended, he had all the characteristic terrors of a Saxon respecting fauns, forest-fiends, white women, and the whole of the superstitions which his ancestors had brought with them from the wilds of Germany. He remembered, moreover, that he was in the house of a Jew, — a people who, besides the other unamiable qualities which popular report ascribed to them,

were supposed to be profound necromancers[1] and cabalists.[2] Nevertheless, after a moment's pause, he obeyed the beckoning summons of the apparition, and followed her into the apartment which she indicated, where he found, to his joyful surprise, that his fair guide was the beautiful Jewess whom he had seen at the tournament, and a short time in her father's apartment.

She asked him the particulars of his transaction with Isaac, which he detailed accurately.

"My father did but jest with thee, good fellow," said Rebecca; "he owes thy master deeper kindness than these arms and steed could pay were their value tenfold. What sum didst thou pay my father even now?"

"Eighty zecchins," said Gurth, surprised at the question.

"In this purse," said Rebecca, "thou wilt find a hundred. Restore to thy master that which is his due, and enrich thyself with the remainder. Haste! Begone! Stay not to render thanks! And beware how you pass through this crowded town, where thou mayst easily lose both thy burden and thy life.—Reuben," she added, clapping her hands together, "light forth this stranger, and fail not to draw lock and bar behind him."

Reuben, a dark-browed and black-bearded Israelite, obeyed her summons with a torch in his hand, undid the outward door of the house, and, conducting Gurth across a paved court, let him out through a wicket in the entrance-gate, which he closed behind him with such bolts and chains as would well have become that of a prison.

"By St. Dunstan," said Gurth, as he stumbled up the dark avenue, "this is no Jewess, but an angel from heaven! Ten zecchins from my brave young master, twenty from this pearl of Zion. Oh, happy day! Such another, Gurth, will redeem thy bondage, and make thee a brother as free of thy guild[3] as

[1] Sorcerers.

[2] Mystics, especially those versed in the *cabala*, or the mysteries of Jewish theosophy.

[3] A society of men of the same trade or profession, banded together for mutual protection and aid.

the best. And then do I lay down my swineherd's horn and staff, and take the freeman's sword and buckler,[1] and follow my young master to the death, without hiding either my face or my name."

CHAPTER XI.

THE nocturnal adventures of Gurth were not yet concluded; indeed, he himself became partly of that mind, when, after passing one or two straggling houses which stood in the outskirts of the village, he found himself in a deep lane, running between two banks overgrown with hazel and holly, while here and there a dwarf oak flung its arms altogether across the path. The lane was, moreover, much rutted and broken up by the carriages which had recently transported articles of various kinds to the tournament; and it was dark, for the banks and bushes intercepted the light of the harvest moon.

From the village were heard the distant sounds of revelry, mixed occasionally with loud laughter, sometimes broken by screams, and sometimes by wild strains of distant music. All these sounds, intimating the disorderly state of the town, crowded with military nobles and their attendants, gave Gurth some uneasiness. "The Jewess was right," he said to himself. "By Heaven and St. Dunstan, I would I were safe at my journey's end with all this treasure! Here are such numbers, I will not say of arrant[2] thieves, but of errant[3] knights and errant squires, errant monks and errant minstrels, errant jugglers and errant jesters, that a man with a single merk[4] would be in danger, much more a poor swineherd with a whole bagful of zecchins. Would

[1] A small round shield used by swordsmen to fend off a blow, and held by a handle in the center; also a small shield worn upon the arm.

[2] Infamous.

[3] Roaming.

[4] Mark.

I were out of the shade of these infernal bushes, that I might at least see any of St. Nicholas's clerks[1] before they spring on my shoulders!"

Gurth accordingly hastened his pace, in order to gain the open common to which the lane led, but was not so fortunate as to accomplish his object. Just as he had attained the upper end of the lane, where the underwood was thickest, four men sprung upon him, even as his fears anticipated, — two from each side of the road, — and seized him so fast that resistance, if at first practicable, would have been now too late. "Surrender your charge," said one of them; "we are the deliverers of the commonwealth, who ease every man of his burden."

"You should not ease me of mine so lightly," muttered Gurth, whose surly honesty could not be tamed even by the pressure of immediate violence, "had I it but in my power to give three strokes in its defense."

"We shall see that presently," said the robber; and, speaking to his companions, he added, "Bring along the knave. I see he would have his head broken, as well as his purse cut, and so be let blood in two veins at once."

Gurth was hurried along agreeably to this mandate, and, having been dragged somewhat roughly over the bank on the left-hand side of the lane, found himself in a straggling thicket which lay betwixt it and the open common. He was compelled to follow his rough conductors into the very depth of this cover, where they stopped unexpectedly in an irregular open space, free in a great measure from trees, and on which, therefore, the beams of the moon fell without much interruption from boughs and leaves. Here his captors were joined by two other persons, apparently belonging to the gang. They had short swords by their sides, and quarter-staves in their hands, and Gurth could now observe that all six wore visors, which rendered their occupation a mat-

[1] St. Nicholas's clerks were clerks of Old Nick or of Satan, "Old Nick" being a vulgar name for the Evil One; highwaymen. Shakespeare uses the term in Henry IV., Part i., act ii., sc. 1.

ter of no question, even had their former proceedings left it in doubt.

"What money hast thou, churl?" said one of the thieves.

"Thirty zecchins of my own property," answered Gurth doggedly.

"A forfeit, a forfeit!" shouted the robbers. "A Saxon has thirty zecchins, and returns sober from a village! An undeniable and unredeemable forfeit of all he hath about him!"

"I hoarded it to purchase my freedom," said Gurth.

"Thou art an ass," replied one of the thieves; "three quarts of double[1] ale had rendered thee as free as thy master, ay, and freer too, if he be a Saxon like thyself."

"A sad truth," replied Gurth; "but if these same thirty zecchins will buy my freedom from you, unloose my hands, and I will pay them to you."

"Hold!" said one who seemed to exercise some authority over the others; "this bag which thou bearest, as I can feel through thy cloak, contains more coin than thou hast told us of."

"It is the good knight my master's," answered Gurth, "of which, assuredly, I would not have spoken a word had you been satisfied with working your will upon mine own property."

"Thou art an honest fellow," replied the robber, "I warrant thee; and we worship not St. Nicholas so devoutly but what thy thirty zecchins may yet escape, if thou deal uprightly with us. Meantime render up thy trust for the time." So saying, he took from Gurth's breast the large leathern pouch, in which the purse given him by Rebecca was inclosed, as well as the rest of the zecchins, and then continued his interrogation. "Who is thy master?"

"The Disinherited Knight," said Gurth.

"Whose good lance," replied the robber, "won the prize in to-day's tourney? What is his name and lineage?"

"It is his pleasure," answered Gurth, "that they be concealed; and from me assuredly you will learn naught of them."

[1] Strong.

"What is thine own name and lineage?"

"To tell that," said Gurth, "might reveal my master's."

"Thou art a saucy groom,"[1] said the robber, "but of that anon.[2] How comes thy master by this gold? Is it of his inheritance, or by what means hath it accrued[3] to him?"

"By his good lance," answered Gurth. "These bags contain the ransom of four good horses and four good suits of armor."

"How much is there?" demanded the robber.

"Two hundred zecchins."

"Only two hundred zecchins!" said the bandit. "Your master hath dealt liberally by the vanquished, and put them to a cheap ransom. Name those who paid the gold."

Gurth did so.

"The armor and horse of the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, at what ransom were they held? Thou seest thou canst not deceive me."

"My master," replied Gurth, "will take naught from the Templar save his life's blood. They are on terms of mortal defiance, and cannot hold courteous intercourse together."

"Indeed!" repeated the robber, and paused after he had said the word. "And what wert thou now doing at Ashby with such a charge in thy custody?"

"I went thither to render to Isaac the Jew of York," replied Gurth, "the price of a suit of armor with which he fitted my master for this tournament."

"And how much didst thou pay to Isaac? Methinks, to judge by weight, there is still two hundred zecchins in that pouch."

"I paid to Isaac," said the Saxon, "eighty zecchins, and he restored me a hundred in lieu thereof."

"How! What!" exclaimed all the robbers at once. "Darest thou trifle with us, that thou tellest such improbable lies?"

"What I tell you," said Gurth, "is as true as the moon is in heaven. You will find the just sum in a silken purse within the leathern pouch, and separate from the rest of the gold."

[1] Serving-man. [2] Later on. [3] Come.

"Bethink thee, man," said the captain; "thou speakest of a Jew,—of an Israelite,—as unapt to restore gold as the dry sand of his deserts to return the cup of water which the pilgrim spills upon them."

"There is no more mercy in them," said another of the banditti, "than in an unbribed sheriff's officer."

"It is, however, as I say," said Gurth.

"Strike a light instantly," said the captain. "I will examine this said purse; and, if it be as this fellow says, the Jew's bounty is little less miraculous than the stream which relieved his fathers in the wilderness."

A light was procured accordingly, and the robber proceeded to examine the purse. The others crowded around him, and even two who had hold of Gurth relaxed their grasp, while they stretched their necks to see the issue of the search. Availing himself of their negligence, by a sudden exertion of strength and activity Gurth shook himself free of their hold, and might have escaped, could he have resolved to leave his master's property behind him; but such was no part of his intention. He wrenched a quarter-staff from one of the fellows, struck down the captain, who was altogether unaware of his purpose, and had well-nigh repossessed himself of the pouch and treasure. The thieves, however, were too nimble for him, and again secured both the bag and the trusty Gurth.

"Knave!" said the captain, getting up, "thou hast broken my head; and with other men of our sort thou wouldst fare the worst for thy insolence. But thou shalt know thy fate instantly. First let us speak of thy master: the knight's matters must go before the squire's, according to the due order of chivalry. Stand thou fast in the mean time. If thou stir again, thou shalt have that will make thee quiet for thy life.—Comrades," he then said, addressing his gang, "this purse is embroidered with Hebrew characters, and I well believe the yeoman's tale is true. The errant knight, his master, must needs pass us toll-free. He is too like ourselves for us to make booty of him, since dogs should

not worry dogs where wolves and foxes are to be found in abundance."

"Like us?" answered one of the gang; "I should like to hear how that is made good."

"Why, thou fool," answered the captain, "is he not poor and disinherited, as we are? Doth he not win his substance at the sword's point, as we do? Hath he not beaten Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, even as we would beat them if we could? Is he not the enemy to life and death of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whom we have so much reason to fear? And were all this otherwise, wouldst thou have us show a worse conscience than an unbeliever, a Hebrew Jew?"

"Nay, that were a shame," muttered the other fellow; "and yet, when I served in the band of stout old Gandelyn, we had no such scruples of conscience. And this insolent peasant—he, too, I warrant me, is to be dismissed scatheless?"

"Not if *thou* canst scathe[1] him," replied the captain.—"Here, fellow," continued he, addressing Gurth, "canst thou use the staff, that thou startst[2] to it so readily?"

"I think," said Gurth, "thou shouldst be best able to reply to that question."

"Nay, by my troth, thou gavest me a round knock," replied the captain. "Do as much for this fellow, and thou shalt pass scot-free;[3] and if thou dost not—why, by my faith, as thou art such a sturdy knave, I think I must pay thy ransom myself.—Take thy staff, miller," he added, "and keep[4] thy head;—and do you others let the fellow go, and give him a staff. There is light enough to lay on load by."[5]

The two champions, being alike armed with quarter-staves, stepped forward into the center of the open space, in order to have the full benefit of the moonlight; the thieves in the mean time laughing, and crying to their comrade, "Miller, beware thy

[1] Injure. [2] Takest.
[3] Free from *scot*, or a fine. [4] Guard.
[5] "To lay on load by" is to ply the staff.

toll-dish!"[1] The miller, on the other hand, holding his quarter-staff by the middle, and making it flourish round his head after the fashion which the French call *faire le moulinet*,[2] exclaimed boastfully, "Come on, churl, an thou darest: thou shalt feel the strength of a miller's thumb!"

"If thou be'st a miller," answered Gurth undauntedly, making his weapon play around his head with equal dexterity, "thou art doubly[3] a thief, and I, as a true man, bid thee defiance."

So saying, the two champions closed together; and for a few minutes they displayed great equality in strength, courage, and skill, intercepting and returning the blows of their adversary with the most rapid dexterity, while, from the continued clatter of their weapons, a person at a distance might have supposed that there were at least six persons engaged on each side. Less obstinate, and even less dangerous, combats have been described in good heroic verse;[4] but that of Gurth and the miller must remain unsung, for want of a sacred poet to do justice to its eventful progress. Yet, though quarter-staff play be out of date, what we can in prose we will do for these bold champions.

Long they fought equally, until the miller began to lose temper at finding himself so stoutly opposed, and at hearing the laughter of his companions, who, as usual in such cases, enjoyed his vexation. This was not a state of mind favorable to the noble game of quarter-staff, in which, as in ordinary cudgel-playing,[5] the utmost coolness is requisite; and it gave Gurth, whose temper was steady though surly, the opportunity of acquiring a decided advantage, in availing himself of which he displayed great mastery.

The miller pressed furiously forward, dealing blows with either

[1] Miller's head; used jocosely.

[2] Play the windmill, twirl.

[3] A satirical hit at the tolls of millers. Their tolls were their charges for grinding.

[4] The verse of epic poetry; in classic poetry, the hexameter; in English, German, and Italian, the iambic of ten syllables.

[5] The sport or contest in which cudgels (staves shorter than the quarter-staff, and wielded with one hand) were used.

end of his weapon alternately, and striving to come to half-staff distance, while Gurth defended himself against the attack, keeping his hands about a yard asunder, and covering himself by shifting his weapon with great celerity, so as to protect his head and body. Thus did he maintain the defensive, making his eye, foot, and hand keep true time, until, observing his antagonist to lose wind, he darted the staff at his face with his left hand; and as the miller endeavored to parry[1] the thrust, he slid his right hand down to his left, and with the full swing of the weapon struck his opponent on the left side of the head, who instantly measured his length upon the greensward.

"Well and yeomanly done!" shouted the robbers; "fair play and Old England forever! The Saxon hath saved both his purse and his hide, and the miller has met his match."

"Thou mayst go thy ways, my friend," said the captain, addressing Gurth, in special confirmation of the general voice, "and I will cause two of my comrades to guide thee by the best way to thy master's pavilion, and to guard thee from night-walkers that might have less tender consciences than ours; for there is many a one of them upon the amble in such a night as this. Take heed, however," he added sternly. "Remember, thou hast refused to tell thy name. Ask not after ours, nor endeavor to discover who or what we are; for, if thou makest such an attempt, thou wilt come by worse fortune than has yet befallen thee."

Gurth thanked the captain for his courtesy, and promised to attend to his recommendation. Two of the outlaws, taking up their quarter-staves, and desiring Gurth to follow close in the rear, walked roundly forward along a by-path which traversed the thicket and the broken ground adjacent to it. On the very verge of the thicket two men spoke to his conductors, and, receiving an answer in a whisper, withdrew into the wood, and suffered them to pass unmolested. This circumstance induced Gurth to believe both that the gang was strong in numbers, and that they kept regular guards around their place of rendezvous.[2]

[1] Ward off. [2] Meeting-place of appointment.

When they arrived on the open heath,[1] where Gurth might have had some trouble in finding his road, the thieves guided him straight forward to the top of a little eminence, whence he could see, spread beneath him in the moonlight, the palisades of the lists, the glimmering pavilions pitched at either end, with the pennons which adorned them fluttering in the moonbeam, and from which could be heard the hum of the song with which the sentinels were beguiling their night-watch.

Here the thieves stopped.

"We go with you no farther," said they: "it were not safe that we should do so. Remember the warning you have received: keep secret what has this night befallen you, and you will have no room to repent it; neglect what is now told you, and the Tower[2] of London shall not protect you against our revenge."

"Good-night to you, kind sirs!" said Gurth. "I shall remember your orders, and trust that there is no offense in wishing you a safer and an honester trade."

Thus they parted; the outlaws returning in the direction from whence they had come, and Gurth proceeding to the tent of his master, to whom, notwithstanding the injunction he had received, he communicated the whole adventures of the evening.

The Disinherited Knight was filled with astonishment, no less

[1] Old English, *heth* ("waste land"), a tract of scrubby land.

[2] One of the most historic buildings in London, on the left bank of the Thames, between the Custom House and St. Katherine's Docks, about twenty minutes' walk from the Royal Exchange; originally a feudal fortress and a palace, then a state prison, and now a government storehouse and armory. It covers a space of twelve or thirteen acres, consisting of a central donjon or keep ninety-two feet high, and walls sixteen feet thick, known as the White Tower, and built in the time of William the Conqueror, surrounded by barracks, armories, etc., of modern date, inclosed within a double line of fortifications, the outer a little lower than the inner, and the whole encompassed by a moat called the "Tower Ditch," now dry, but still able to be flooded by the garrison. The other principal towers of the pile are the Bloody Tower, called so from the murder of the princes, sons of Edward IV.; Wakefield Tower, in which the prisoners from the field of Wakefield (1460) were confined; the Bell Tower; the Beauchamp Tower; the Boyer Tower.

at the generosity of Rebecca, by which, however, he resolved he would not profit, than that of the robbers, to whose profession such a quality seemed totally foreign. His course of reflections upon these singular circumstances was, however, interrupted by the necessity for taking repose, which the fatigue of the preceding day, and the propriety of refreshing himself for the morrow's encounter, rendered alike indispensable.

The knight, therefore, stretched himself for repose upon a rich couch with which the tent was provided; and the faithful Gurth, extending his hardy limbs upon a bear-skin which formed a sort of carpet to the pavilion, laid himself across the opening of the tent, so that no one could enter without awakening him.

CHAPTER XII.

MORNING arose in unclouded splendor, and ere the sun was much above the horizon, the idlest of the most eager of the spectators appeared on the common, moving to the lists as to a general center, in order to secure a favorable situation for viewing the continuation of the expected games.

The marshals and their attendants appeared next on the field, together with the heralds, for the purpose of receiving the names of the knights who intended to joust, with the side which each chose to espouse. This was a necessary precaution, in order to secure equality betwixt the two bodies who should be opposed to each other.

According to due formality, the Disinherited Knight was to be considered as leader of the one body, while Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had been rated as having done second-best in the preceding day, was named first champion of the other band. Those who had concurred in the challenge adhered to his party, of course, excepting only Ralph de Vipont, whom his fall had rendered un-

fit so soon to put on his armor. There was no want of distinguished and noble candidates to fill up the ranks on either side.

On the present occasion, about fifty knights were inscribed as desirous of combating upon each side, when the marshals declared that no more could be admitted, to the disappointment of several who were too late in preferring their claim to be included.

About the hour of ten o'clock the whole plain was crowded with horsemen, horsewomen, and foot-passengers, hastening to the tournament; and shortly after, a grand flourish of trumpets announced Prince John and his retinue.

About the same time arrived Cedric the Saxon, with the Lady Rowena, unattended, however, by Athelstane. This Saxon lord had arrayed his tall and strong person in armor, in order to take his place among the combatants, and, considerably to the surprise of Cedric, had chosen to enlist himself on the part of the Knight Templar. The Saxon, indeed, had remonstrated strongly with his friend upon the injudicious choice he had made of his party; but he had only received that sort of answer usually given by those who are more obstinate in following their own course than strong in justifying it.

His best, if not his only reason, for adhering to the party of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Athelstane had the prudence to keep to himself. Though his apathy of disposition prevented his taking any means to recommend himself to the Lady Rowena, he was nevertheless by no means insensible to her charms, and considered his union with her as a matter already fixed beyond doubt by the assent of Cedric and her other friends. It had therefore been with smothered displeasure that the proud though indolent Lord of Coningsburgh beheld the victor of the preceding day select Rowena as the object of that honor which it became his privilege to confer. In order to punish him for a preference which seemed to interfere with his own suit, Athelstane, confident of his strength, and to whom his flatterers, at least, ascribed great skill in arms, had determined not only to deprive the Dis-

inherited Knight of his powerful succor, but, if an opportunity should occur, to make him feel the weight of his battle-ax.

De Bracy, and other knights attached to Prince John, in obedience to a hint from him, had joined the party of the challengers; John being desirous to secure, if possible, the victory to that side. On the other hand, many other knights, both English and Norman, natives and strangers, took part against the challengers, the more readily that the opposite band was to be led by so distinguished a champion as the Disinherited Knight had approved himself.

As soon as Prince John observed that the destined queen of the day had arrived upon the field, assuming that air of courtesy which sat well upon him when he was pleased to exhibit it, he rode forward to meet her, doffed his bonnet, and, alighting from his horse, assisted the Lady Rowena from her saddle, while his followers uncovered at the same time, and one of the most distinguished dismounted to hold her palfrey.

"It is thus," said Prince John, "that we set the dutiful example of loyalty to the Queen of Love and Beauty, and are ourselves her guide to the throne which she must this day occupy.—Ladies," he said, "attend your queen, as you wish in your turn to be distinguished by like honors."

So saying, the prince marshaled Rowena to the seat of honor opposite his own, while the fairest and most distinguished ladies present crowded after her to obtain places as near as possible to their temporary sovereign.

No sooner was Rowena seated, than a burst of music, half drowned by the shouts of the multitude, greeted her new dignity. Meantime the sun shone fierce and bright upon the polished arms of the knights of either side, who crowded the opposite extremities of the lists, and held eager conference together concerning the best mode of arranging their line of battle and supporting the conflict.

The heralds then proclaimed silence until the laws of the tourney should be rehearsed. These were calculated in some degree

to abate the dangers of the day, — a precaution the more necessary, as the conflict was to be maintained with sharp swords and pointed lances.

The champions were therefore prohibited to thrust with the sword, and were confined to striking. A knight, it was announced, might use a mace[1] or battle-ax at pleasure, but the dagger was a prohibited weapon. A knight unhorsed might renew the fight on foot with any other on the opposite side in the same predicament; but mounted horsemen were in that case forbidden to assail him. When any knight could force his antagonist to the extremity of the lists, so as to touch the palisade with his person or arms, such opponent was obliged to yield himself vanquished, and his armor and horse were placed at the disposal of the conqueror. A knight thus overcome was not permitted to take further share in the combat. If any combatant was struck down, and unable to recover his feet, his squire or page might enter the lists and drag his master out of the press; but in that case the knight was adjudged vanquished, and his arms and horse declared forfeited. The combat was to cease as soon as Prince John should throw down his leading-staff or truncheon. Any knight breaking the rules of the tournament, or otherwise transgressing the rules of honorable chivalry, was liable to be stripped of his arms, and, having his shield reversed, to be placed in that posture astride upon the bars of the palisade, and exposed to public derision, in punishment of his unknightly conduct. Having announced these precautions, the heralds concluded with an exhortation to each good knight to do his duty, and to merit favor from the Queen of Beauty and of Love.

This proclamation having been made, the heralds withdrew to

[1] A kind of war-club for dealing heavy blows, designed especially to fracture armor; of a great variety of forms; carried frequently by horse-soldiers at the saddle-bow by a thong running through the upper part of the handle. The thong, wound about the wrist, also served to prevent the loss of the weapon in dealing a blow. The head of the club was commonly of metal, and was often spiked.

their stations. The knights, entering at either end of the lists in long procession, arranged themselves in a double file, precisely opposite to each other, the leader of each party being in the center of the foremost rank, — a post which he did not occupy until each had carefully arranged the ranks of his party, and stationed every one in his place.

It was a goodly, and at the same time an anxious, sight to behold so many gallant champions, mounted bravely and armed richly, stand ready prepared for an encounter so formidable, seated on their war-saddles like so many pillars of iron, and awaiting the signal of encounter with the same ardor as their generous steeds, which, by neighing, and pawing the ground, gave signal of their impatience.

As yet the knights held their long lances upright, their bright points glancing to the sun, and the streamers with which they were decorated fluttering over the plumage of the helmets. Thus they remained while the marshals of the field surveyed their ranks with the utmost exactness, lest either party had more or fewer than the appointed number. The tale was found exactly complete. The marshals then withdrew from the lists, and William de Wyvil, with a voice of thunder, pronounced the signal words, *Laissez aller!*[1] The trumpets sounded as he spoke; the spears of the champions were at once lowered, and placed in the rests; the spurs were dashed into the flanks of the horses; and the two foremost ranks of either party rushed upon each other in full gallop, and met in the middle of the lists with a shock, the sound of which was heard at a mile's distance. The rear rank of each party advanced at a slower pace to sustain the defeated, and follow up the success of the victors of their party.

The consequences of the encounter were not instantly seen; for the dust raised by the trampling of so many steeds darkened the air, and it was a minute ere the anxious spectators could see the fate of the encounter. When the fight became visible, half the knights on each side were dismounted, some by the dexterity

[1] "Let go! Go!"

of their adversary's lance, some by the superior weight and strength of opponents, which had borne down both horse and man. Some lay stretched on earth, as if never more to rise; some had already gained their feet, and were closing hand to hand with those of their antagonists who were in the same predicament; and several on both sides who had received wounds by which they were disabled, were stopping their blood with their scarfs, and endeavoring to extricate themselves from the tumult. The mounted knights, whose lances had been almost all broken by the fury of the encounter, were now closely engaged with their swords, shouting their war-cries and exchanging buffets as if honor and life depended on the issue of the combat.

The tumult was presently increased by the advance of the second rank on either side, which, acting as a reserve, now rushed on to aid their companions. The followers of Brian de Bois-Guilbert shouted, "*Ha! Beau-seant! Beau-seant!*[1] For the Temple! For the Temple!" The opposite party shouted in answer, "*Desdichado! Desdichado!*" which watchword they took from the motto upon their leader's shield.

The champions thus encountering each other with the utmost fury, and with alternate success, the tide of battle seemed to flow now towards the southern, now towards the northern, extremity of the lists, as the one or the other party prevailed. Meantime the clang of the blows and the shouts of the combatants mixed fearfully with the sound of the trumpets, and drowned the groans of those who fell and lay rolling defenseless beneath the feet of the horses. The splendid armor of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood, and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-ax. The gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snowflakes. All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.

[1] *Beau-seant* was the name of the Templars' banner, half black, half white, to intimate that they were candid and fair towards Christians, but black and terrible towards infidels.

The ladies encouraged the combatants not only by clapping their hands and waving their veils and kerchiefs, but even by exclaiming, "Brave lance! Good sword!" when any successful thrust or blow took place under their observation.

And between every pause was heard the voice of the heralds exclaiming, "Fight on, brave knights! Man dies, but glory lives! Fight on! Death is better than defeat! Fight on, brave knights! for bright eyes behold your deeds!"

Amid the varied fortunes of the combat, the eyes of all endeavored to discover the leaders of each band, who, mingling in the thick of the fight, encouraged their companions both by voice and example. Both displayed great feats of gallantry, nor did either Bois-Guilbert or the Disinherited Knight find in the ranks opposed to them a champion who could be termed their unquestioned match. They repeatedly endeavored to single out each other, spurred by mutual animosity, and aware that the fall of either leader might be considered as decisive of victory. Such, however, was the crowd and confusion, that during the earlier part of the conflict their efforts to meet were unavailing; and they were repeatedly separated by the eagerness of their followers, each of whom was anxious to win honor by measuring his strength against the leader of the opposite party.

But when the field became thin by the numbers on either side who had yielded themselves vanquished, had been compelled to the extremity of the lists, or been otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the strife, the Templar and the Disinherited Knight at length encountered hand to hand with all the fury that mortal animosity, joined to rivalry of honor, could inspire. Such was the address of each in parrying and striking, that the spectators broke forth into a unanimous and involuntary shout expressive of their delight and admiration.

But at this moment the party of the Disinherited Knight had the worst, the gigantic arm of Front-de-Bœuf on the one flank, and the ponderous strength of Athelstane on the other, bearing down and dispersing those immediately exposed to them. Find-

ing themselves freed from their immediate antagonists, it seems to have occurred to both these knights at the same instant that they would render the most decisive advantage to their party by aiding the Templar in his contest with his rival. Turning their horses, therefore, at the same moment, the Norman spurred against the Disinherited Knight on the one side, and the Saxon on the other. It was utterly impossible that the object of this unequal and unexpected assault could have sustained it, had he not been warned by a general cry from the spectators, who could not but take interest in one exposed to such disadvantage.

"Beware, beware, Sir Disinherited!" was shouted so universally, that the knight became aware of his danger, and, striking a full blow at the Templar, he reined back his steed in the same moment, so as to escape the charge of Athelstane and Front-de-Bœuf. These knights, therefore, their aim being thus eluded, rushed from opposite sides betwixt the object of their attack and the Templar, almost running their horses against each other ere they could stop their career. Recovering their horses, however, and wheeling them round, the whole three pursued their united purpose of bearing to the earth the Disinherited Knight.

Nothing could have saved him except the remarkable strength and activity of the noble horse which he had won on the preceding day.

This stood him in the more stead, as the horse of Bois-Guilbert was wounded, and those of Front-de-Bœuf and Athelstane were both tired with the weight of their gigantic masters, clad in complete armor, and with the preceding exertions of the day. The masterly horsemanship of the Disinherited Knight, and the activity of the noble animal which he mounted, enabled him for a few minutes to keep at sword's point his three antagonists, turning and wheeling with the agility of a hawk upon the wing, keeping his enemies as far separate as he could, and rushing now against the one, now against the other, dealing sweeping blows with his sword, without waiting to receive those which were aimed at him in return.

But although the lists rang with the applauses of his dexterity, it was evident that he must at last be overpowered: and the nobles around Prince John implored him with one voice to throw down his warder,[1] and to save so brave a knight from the disgrace of being overcome by odds.

"Not I, by the light of Heaven!" answered Prince John. "This same springal,[2] who conceals his name and despises our proffered hospitality, has already gained one prize, and may now afford to let others have their turn." As he spoke thus, an unexpected incident changed the fortune of the day.

There was among the ranks of the Disinherited Knight a champion in black armor, mounted on a black horse, large of size, tall, and to all appearance powerful and strong, like the rider by whom he was mounted. This knight, who bore on his shield no device of any kind, had hitherto evinced very little interest in the event of the fight, beating off with seeming ease those combatants who attacked him, but neither pursuing his advantages nor himself assailing any one. In short, he had hitherto acted the part rather of a spectator than of a party in the tournament, — a circumstance which procured him among the spectators the name *Le Noir Faineant*, or the Black Sluggard.

At once this knight seemed to throw aside his apathy when he discovered the leader of his party so hard bested;[3] for, setting spurs to his horse, which was quite fresh, he came to his assistance like a thunderbolt, exclaiming in a voice like a trumpet-call, "*Desdichado*, to the rescue!" It was high time, for, while the Disinherited Knight was pressing upon the Templar, Front-de-Bœuf had got nigh to him with his uplifted sword; but ere the blow could descend, the Sable Knight dealt a stroke on his head, which, glancing from the polished helmet, lighted with violence scarcely abated on the chamfron of the steed, and Front-de-Bœuf rolled on the ground, both horse and man equally stunned by the fury of the blow. *Le Noir Faineant* then turned his horse upon

[1] Emblem of authority; truncheon.
[2] Young man.
[3] Placed in peril; beset.

Athelstane of Coningsburgh; and, his own sword having been broken in his encounter with Front-de-Bœuf, he wrenched from the hand of the bulky Saxon the battle-ax which he wielded, and, like one familiar with the use of the weapon, bestowed him such a blow upon the crest that Athelstane also lay senseless on the field. Having achieved this double feat, for which he was the more highly applauded that it was totally unexpected from him, the knight seemed to resume the sluggishness of his character, returning calmly to the northern extremity of the lists, leaving his leader to cope as he best could with Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This was no longer matter of so much difficulty as formerly. The Templar's horse had bled much, and gave way under the shock of the Disinherited Knight's charge. Brian de Bois-Guilbert rolled on the field, encumbered with the stirrup, from which he was unable to draw his foot. His antagonist sprung from horseback, waved his fatal sword over the head of his adversary, and commanded him to yield himself; when Prince John, more moved by the Templar's dangerous situation than he had been by that of his rival, saved him the mortification of confessing himself vanquished by casting down his warder and putting an end to the conflict.

It was, indeed, only the relics and embers of the fight which continued to burn; for of the few knights who still continued in the lists the greater part had, by tacit consent, forborne the conflict for some time, leaving it to be determined by the strife of the leaders.

The squires, who had found it a matter of danger and difficulty to attend their masters during the engagement, now thronged into the lists to pay their dutiful attendance to the wounded, who were removed with the utmost care and attention to the neighboring pavilions, or to the quarters prepared for them in the adjoining village.

Thus ended the memorable field of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, one of the most gallantly contested tournaments of that age; for although only four knights, including one who was smothered by

the heat of his armor, had died upon the field, yet upwards of thirty were desperately wounded, four or five of whom never recovered. Several more were disabled for life; and those who escaped best carried the marks of the conflict to the grave with them.

It being now the duty of Prince John to name the knight who had done best, he determined that the honor of the day remained with the knight whom the popular voice had termed *Le Noir Faineant.* It was pointed out to the prince, in impeachment of this decree, that the victory had been in fact won by the Disinherited Knight, who, in the course of the day, had overcome six champions with his own hand, and who had finally unhorsed and struck down the leader of the opposite party. But Prince John adhered to his own opinion, on the ground that the Disinherited Knight and his party had lost the day but for the powerful assistance of the Knight of the Black Armor, to whom, therefore, he persisted in awarding the prize.

To the surprise of all present, however, the knight thus preferred was nowhere to be found. He had left the lists immediately when the conflict ceased, and had been observed by some spectators to move down one of the forest glades with the same slow pace and listless and indifferent manner which had procured him the epithet of the Black Sluggard. After he had been summoned twice by sound of trumpet and proclamation of the heralds, it became necessary to name another to receive the honors which had been assigned to him. Prince John had now no further excuse for resisting the claim of the Disinherited Knight, whom, therefore, he named the champion of the day.

Through a field slippery with blood, and encumbered with broken armor and the bodies of slain and wounded horses, the marshals of the lists again conducted the victor to the foot of Prince John's throne.

"Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since by that title only you will consent to be known to us, we a second time award to you the honors of this tournament, and announce to you your

right to claim and receive from the hands of the Queen of Love and Beauty the chaplet of honor which your valor has justly deserved." The knight bowed low and gracefully, but returned no answer.

While the trumpets sounded, while the heralds strained their voices in proclaiming honor to the brave, and glory to the victor, while ladies waved their silken kerchiefs and embroidered veils, and while all ranks joined in a clamorous shout of exultation, the marshals conducted the Disinherited Knight across the lists to the foot of that throne of honor which was occupied by the Lady Rowena.

On the lower step of this throne the champion was made to kneel down. Indeed, his whole action since the fight had ended seemed rather to have been upon the impulse of those around him than from his own free will; and it was observed that he tottered as they guided him the second time across the lists. Rowena, descending from her station with a graceful and dignified step, was about to place the chaplet which she held in her hand upon the helmet of the champion, when the marshals exclaimed with one voice, "It must not be thus: his head must be bare." The knight muttered faintly a few words, which were lost in the hollow of his helmet, but their purport seemed to be a desire that his casque might not be removed.

Whether from love of form or from curiosity, the marshals paid no attention to his expressions of reluctance, but unhelmeted him by cutting the laces of his casque, and undoing the fastening of his gorget.[1] When the helmet was removed, the well-formed yet sun-burnt features of a young man of twenty-five were seen amidst a profusion of short, fair hair. His countenance was as pale as death, and marked in one or two places with streaks of blood.

Rowena had no sooner beheld him than she uttered a faint shriek; but at once summoning up the energy of her disposition, and compelling herself, as it were, to proceed, while her frame

[1] Armor for protecting the throat.

yet trembled with the violence of sudden emotion, she placed upon the drooping head of the victor the splendid chaplet which was the destined reward of the day, and pronounced in a clear and distinct tone these words: "I bestow on thee this chaplet, Sir Knight, as the meed of valor assigned to this day's victor." Here she paused a moment, and then firmly added, "And upon brows more worthy could a wreath of chivalry never be placed."

The knight stooped his head and kissed the hand of the lovely sovereign by whom his valor had been rewarded, and then, sinking yet farther forward, lay prostrate at her feet.

There was a general consternation. Cedric, who had been struck mute by the sudden appearance of his banished son, now rushed forward, as if to separate him from Rowena; but this had been already accomplished by the marshals of the field, who, guessing the cause of Ivanhoe's swoon, had hastened to undo his armor, and found that the head of a lance had penetrated his breastplate and inflicted a wound in his side.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE name of Ivanhoe was no sooner pronounced than it flew from mouth to mouth with all the celerity with which eagerness could convey and curiosity receive it. It was not long ere it reached the circle of the prince, whose brow darkened as he heard the news. Looking around him, however, with an air of scorn, "My lords," said he, "and especially you, Sir Prior, what think ye of the doctrine the learned tell us concerning innate attractions and antipathies? Methinks that I felt the presence of my brother's minion,[1] even when I least guessed whom yonder suit of armor inclosed."

"Front-de-Bœuf must prepare to restore his fief[2] of Ivanhoe,"

[1] A person held in favor or esteem.

[2] Land held from a lord by feudal tenure (see Note 3, p. 2).

said De Bracy, who, having discharged his part honorably in the tournament, had laid his shield and helmet aside, and again mingled with the prince's retinue.

"Ay," answered Waldemar Fitzurse, "this gallant is likely to reclaim the castle and manor[1] which Richard assigned to him, and which your Highness's generosity has since given to Front-de-Bœuf."

"Front-de-Bœuf," replied John, "is a man more willing to swallow three manors such as Ivanhoe than to disgorge one of them. For the rest, sirs, I hope none here will deny my right to confer the fiefs of the Crown upon the faithful followers who are around me, and ready to perform the usual military service,[2] in the room of those who have wandered to foreign countries, and can neither render homage nor service when called upon."

The audience were too much interested in the question not to pronounce the prince's assumed right altogether indubitable. "A generous prince, a most noble lord, who thus takes upon himself the task of rewarding his faithful followers!"

Such were the words which burst from the train, — expectants, all of them, of similar grants at the expense of King Richard's followers and favorites, if indeed they had not as yet received such.

Waldemar, whose curiosity had led him towards the place where Ivanhoe had fallen to the ground, now returned. "The gallant," said he, "is likely to give your Highness little disturbance, and to leave Front-de-Bœuf in the quiet possession of his gains. He is severely wounded."

"Whatever becomes of him," said Prince John, "he is victor of the day; and were he tenfold our enemy, or the devoted friend of our brother, which is perhaps the same, his wounds must be looked to. Our own physician shall attend him."

A stern smile curled the prince's lip as he spoke. Waldemar

[1] Land about the castle.

[2] "Usual military service" refers to one of the conditions on which fiefs were held in accordance with the feudal system.

Fitzurse hastened to reply that Ivanhoe was already removed from the lists, and in the custody of his friends.

"I was somewhat afflicted," he said, "to see the grief of the Queen of Love and Beauty, whose sovereignty of a day this event has changed into mourning. I am not a man to be moved by a woman's lament for her lover; but this same Lady Rowena suppressed her sorrow with such dignity of manner that it could only be discovered by her folded hands and her tearless eye, which trembled as it remained fixed on the lifeless form before her."

"Who is this Lady Rowena," said Prince John, "of whom we have heard so much?"

"A Saxon heiress of large possessions," replied the Prior Aymer, "a rose of loveliness and a jewel of wealth, the fairest among a thousand, a bundle of myrrh and a cluster of camphire."

"We shall cheer her sorrows," said Prince John, "and wed her to a Norman. She seems a minor, and must therefore be at our royal disposal in marriage. — How sayst thou, De Bracy? What thinkst thou of gaining fair lands and livings by wedding a Saxon, after the fashion of the followers of the Conqueror?"

"If the lands are to my liking, my lord," answered De Bracy, "it will be hard to displease me with a bride; and deeply will I hold myself bound to your Highness for a good deed, which will fulfill all promises made in favor of your servant and vassal."

"We will not forget it," said Prince John: "and that we may instantly go to work, command our seneschal presently to order the attendance of the Lady Rowena and her company; that is, the rude churl her guardian, and the Saxon ox whom the Black Knight struck down in the tournament upon this evening's banquet. — De Bigot," he added to his seneschal, "thou wilt word this our second summons so courteously as to gratify the pride of these Saxons, and make it impossible for them again to refuse; although, by the bones of Becket,[1] courtesy to them is casting pearls before swine."

[1] Sir Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, a celebrated English prelate, born in London about 1117; assassinated at Canterbury Cathedral

Prince John had proceeded thus far, and was about to give the signal for retiring from the lists, when a small billet was put into his hand.

"From whence?" said Prince John, looking at the person by whom it was delivered.

"From foreign parts, my lord, but from whence I know not," replied his attendant. "A Frenchman brought it hither, who said he had ridden night and day to put it into the hands of your Highness."

The prince looked narrowly at the superscription, and then at the seal, placed so as to secure the flox-silk[1] with which the billet was surrounded, and which bore the impression of three fleurs-de-lis.[2] John then opened the billet with apparent agitation, which visibly and greatly increased when he had perused the contents, which were expressed in these words:—

"*Take heed to yourself, for the Devil is unchained!*"[3]

The prince turned as pale as death, looked first on the earth and then to heaven, like a man who has received news that sentence of execution has been passed upon him. Recovering from the first effects of his surprise, he took Waldemar Fitzurse and De Bracy aside, and put the billet into their hands successively. "It means," he added in a faltering voice, "that my brother Richard has obtained his freedom."

"This may be a false alarm or a forged letter," said De Bracy.

Dec. 29, 1170, by four knights, who, acting on a hasty exclamation of Henry II. against the archbishop, thought they were doing him a service by ridding him of his troublesome archbishop. Henry, horror-stricken at the act, declared himself guiltless of complicity in it. Becket was canonized as St. Thomas of Canterbury in 1173, and for three centuries his shrine was a pilgrimage for Englishmen (see Chaucer's Canterbury Tales).

[1] Floss silk; untwisted silk.

[2] Lilies; the royal arms of France.

[3] The author brings in at this place, dramatically (though not historically), the communication which Philip of France wrote John when he heard that Richard's ransom had been fixed (see Introduction, p. vii.).

"It is France's[1] own hand and seal," replied Prince John.

"It is time, then," said Fitzurse, "to draw our party to a head, either at York or some other centrical place. A few days later, and it will be indeed too late. Your Highness must break short this present mummery."[2]

"The yeomen and commons," said De Bracy, "must not be dismissed discontented for lack of their share in the sports."

"The day," said Waldemar, "is not yet very far spent. Let the archers shoot a few rounds at the target, and the prize be adjudged. This will be an abundant fulfillment of the prince's promises, so far as this herd of Saxon serfs is concerned."

"I thank thee, Waldemar," said the prince; "thou remindest me, too, that I have a debt to pay to that insolent peasant who yesterday insulted our person. Our banquet also shall go forward to-night as we proposed. Were this my last hour of power, it should be an hour sacred to revenge and to pleasure. Let new cares come with to-morrow's new day."

The sound of the trumpets soon recalled those spectators who had already begun to leave the field; and proclamation was made that Prince John, suddenly called by high and peremptory public duties, held himself obliged to discontinue the entertainments of to-morrow's festival; nevertheless, that, unwilling so many good yeomen should depart without a trial of skill, he was pleased to appoint them, before leaving the ground, presently to execute the competition of archery intended for the morrow. To the best archer a prize was to be awarded, being a bugle-horn mounted with silver, and a silken baldric richly ornamented with a medallion of St. Hubert,[3] the patron of silvan sport.

[1] Philip of France.

[2] Empty sport.

[3] Son of Bertrand, Duke of Guienne, a great sportsman, and, according to story, converted by a stag which carried between its antlers a gleaming cross. The stag, so goes the story, spoke to him, and besought him to turn from his merry life to the service of the Church. Hubert did so immediately, and later became Bishop of Lüttich, in 708. He died in 727. St. Hubert's Day, the 3d of November, marked the close of the hunting season.

More than thirty yeomen at first presented themselves as competitors, several of whom were rangers and under-keepers in the royal forests of Needwood and Charnwood. When, however, the archers understood with whom they were to be matched, upwards of twenty withdrew themselves from the contest, unwilling to encounter the dishonor of almost certain defeat; for in those days the skill of each celebrated marksman was as well known for many miles round him as the qualities of a horse trained at Newmarket[1] are familiar to those who frequent that well-known meeting.

The diminished list of competitors for silvan fame still amounted to eight. Prince John stepped from his royal seat to view more nearly the persons of these chosen yeomen, several of whom wore the royal livery. Having satisfied his curiosity by this investigation, he looked for the object of his resentment, whom he observed standing on the same spot, and with the same composed countenance which he had exhibited upon the preceding day.

"Fellow," said Prince John, "I guessed by thy insolent babble thou wert no true lover of the longbow,[2] and I see thou darest not adventure thy skill among such merry men as stand yonder."

"Under favor, sir," replied the yeoman, "I have another reason for refraining to shoot besides the fearing discomfiture and disgrace."

"And what is thy other reason?" said Prince John, who, for some cause which perhaps he could not himself have explained, felt a painful curiosity respecting this individual.

"Because," replied the woodsman, "I know not if these yeomen and I are used to shoot at the same marks; and because, moreover, I know not how your Grace might relish the winning

[1] A town of England, in the counties of Suffolk and Cambridge, about thirteen miles east-northeast of Cambridge. The famous Newmarket races are held there.

[2] A bow about the height of a man; longbow in contradistinction to crossbow.

of a third prize by one who has unwittingly fallen under your displeasure."

Prince John colored as he put the question, "What is thy name, yeoman?"

"Locksley," answered the yeoman.

"Then, Locksley," said Prince John, "thou shalt shoot in thy turn, when these yeomen have displayed their skill. If thou carriest the prize, I will add to it twenty nobles;[1] but if thou losest it, thou shalt be stripped of thy Lincoln green, and scourged out of the lists with bowstrings, for a wordy and insolent braggart."

"And how if I refuse to shoot on such a wager?" said the yeoman. "Your Grace's power, supported as it is by so many men-at-arms, may indeed easily strip and scourge me, but cannot compel me to bend or to draw my bow."

"If thou refusest my fair proffer," said the prince, "the provost of the lists shall cut thy bowstring, break thy bow and arrows, and expel thee from the presence as a faint-hearted craven."

"This is no fair chance you put on me, proud prince," said the yeoman, "to compel me to peril myself against the best archers of Leicester and Staffordshire, under the penalty of infamy if they should overshoot me. Nevertheless, I will obey your pleasure."

"Look to him close, men-at-arms," said Prince John. "His heart is sinking. I am jealous lest he attempt to escape the trial. — And do you, good fellows, shoot boldly round. A buck and a butt of wine are ready for your refreshment in yonder tent when the prize is won."

A target was placed at the upper end of the southern avenue which led to the lists. The contending archers took their station in turn at the bottom of the southern access, the distance between that station and the mark allowing full distance for what was called a "shot at rovers."[2] The archers, having previously determined by lot their order of precedence, were to shoot each

[1] A noble is a gold coin worth about $1.61.

[2] A kind of rising shot at random.

three shafts in succession. The sports were regulated by an officer of inferior rank, termed the "provost of the games;" for the high rank of the marshals of the lists would have been held degraded had they condescended to superintend the sports of the yeomanry.

One by one the archers, stepping forward, delivered their shafts yeomanlike and bravely. Of the twenty-four arrows, shot in succession, ten were fixed in the target, and the others ranged so near it, that, considering the distance of the mark, it was accounted good archery. Of the ten shafts which hit the target, two within the inner ring were shot by Hubert, a forester in the service of Malvoisin, who was accordingly pronounced victorious.

"Now, Locksley," said Prince John to the bold yeoman with a bitter smile, "wilt thou try conclusions with Hubert, or wilt thou yield up bow, baldric, and quiver to the provost of the sports?"

"Sith[1] it be no better," said Locksley, "I am content to try my fortune, on condition, that, when I have shot two shafts at yonder mark of Hubert's, he shall be bound to shoot one at that which I shall propose."

"That is but fair," answered Prince John, "and it shall not be refused thee. — If thou dost beat this braggart, Hubert, I will fill the bugle with silver pennies for thee."

"A man can do but his best," answered Hubert; "but my grandsire drew a good longbow at Hastings, and I trust not to dishonor his memory."

The former target was now removed, and a fresh one of the same size placed in its room. Hubert, who, as victor in the first trial of skill, had the right to shoot first, took his aim with great deliberation, long measuring the distance with his eye, while he held in his hand his bended bow, with the arrow placed on the string. At length he made a step forward, and raising the bow at the full stretch of his left arm, till the center or grasping-place was nigh level with his face, he drew his bowstring to his ear.

[1] Since.

The arrow whistled through the air, and lighted within the inner ring of the target, but not exactly in the center.

"You have not allowed for the wind, Hubert," said his antagonist, bending his bow, "or that had been a better shot."

So saying, and without showing the least anxiety to pause upon his aim, Locksley stepped to the appointed station, and shot his arrow as carelessly in appearance as if he had not even looked at the mark. He was speaking almost at the instant that the shaft left the bowstring, yet it alighted in the target two inches nearer to the white spot which marked the center than that of Hubert.

"By the light of Heaven!" said Prince John to Hubert, "an thou suffer that runagate[1] knave to overcome thee, thou art worthy of the gallows!"

Hubert had but one set speech for all occasions. "An your Highness were to hang me," he said, "a man can but do his best. Nevertheless, my grandsire drew a good bow"—

"The foul fiend on thy grandsire and all his generation!" interrupted John. "Shoot, knave, and shoot thy best, or it shall be the worse for thee!"

Thus exhorted, Hubert resumed his place, and, not neglecting the caution which he had received from his adversary, he made the necessary allowance for a very light air of wind which had just arisen, and shot so successfully that his arrow alighted in the very center of the target.

"A Hubert, a Hubert!" shouted the populace, more interested in a known person than in a stranger. "In the clout,[2] in the clout! A Hubert forever!"

"Thou canst not mend that shot, Locksley," said the prince with an insulting smile.

"I will notch his shaft for him, however," replied Locksley.

And letting fly his arrow with a little more precaution than before, it lighted right upon that of his competitor, which it split to shivers. The people who stood around were so astonished at his wonderful dexterity that they could not even give vent to

[1] Renegade; a wanderer. [2] The center mark of a target.

their surprise in their usual clamor. "This must be the Devil, and no man of flesh and blood," whispered the yeomen to each other. "Such archery was never seen since a bow was first bent in Britain."

"And now," said Locksley, "I will crave your Grace's permission to plant such a mark as is used in the North Country, and welcome every brave yeoman who shall try a shot at it to win a smile from the bonny lass he loves best."

He then turned to leave the lists. "Let your guards attend me," he said, "if you please: I go but to cut a rod from the next willow-bush."

Prince John made a signal that some attendants should follow him in case of his escape; but the cry of "Shame, shame!" which burst from the multitude, induced him to alter his ungenerous purpose.

Locksley returned almost instantly with a willow wand about six feet in length, perfectly straight, and rather thicker than a man's thumb. He began to peel this with great composure, observing, at the same time, that to ask a good woodsman to shoot at a target so broad as had hitherto been used was to put shame upon his skill. For his own part, he said, and in the land where he was bred, men would as soon take for their mark King Arthur's[1] Round Table, which held sixty knights around it. "A child of seven years old," he said, "might hit yonder target with a headless shaft; but," added he, walking deliberately to the other end of the lists, and sticking the willow wand upright in the ground, "he that hits that rod at fivescore yards, I call him

[1] The famous king of Britain about whom so much romance has been woven; supposed to have lived at the time of the Saxon invasion, and to have died at Glastonbury, 542. About him cluster the Arthurian legends so celebrated in English literature, which Tennyson has woven into such exquisite grace in his Idylls of the King (see, also, Sir Thomas Mallory's Morte d'Arthur). The Round Table was, according to story, of marble, large and circular in form, made by the wizard Merlin, and became Arthur's through his wife Guinevere. Each knight had his seat at it, and his name upon it in gold letters.

an archer fit to bear both bow and quiver before a king, an it were the stout King Richard himself."

"My grandsire," said Hubert, "drew a good bow at the battle of Hastings, and never shot at such a mark in his life; and neither will I. If this yeoman can cleave that rod, I give him the bucklers; or, rather, I yield to the devil that is in his jerkin,[1] and not to any human skill. A man can but do his best, and I will not shoot where I am sure to miss. I might as well shoot at the edge of our parson's whittle, or at a wheat-straw, or at a sunbeam, as at a twinkling white streak which I can hardly see."

"Cowardly dog!" said Prince John. "Sirrah Locksley, do thou shoot; but, if thou hittest such a mark, I will say thou art the first man ever did so. Howe'er it be, thou shalt not crow over us with a mere show of superior skill."

"I will do my best, as Hubert says," answered Locksley: "no man can do more."

So saying, he again bent his bow, but on the present occasion looked with attention to his weapon, and changed the string, which he thought was no longer truly round, having been a little frayed by the two former shots. He then took his aim with some deliberation, and the multitude awaited the event in breathless silence. The archer vindicated their opinion of his skill: his arrow split the willow rod against which it was aimed. A jubilee of acclamations followed; and even Prince John, in admiration of Locksley's skill, lost for an instant his dislike to his person. "These twenty nobles," he said, "which, with the bugle, thou hast fairly won, are thine own. We will make them fifty if thou wilt take livery and service with us as a yeoman of our body-guard, and be near to our person; for never did so strong a hand bend a bow, or so true an eye direct a shaft."

"Pardon me, noble prince," said Locksley, "but I have vowed, that, if ever I take service, it should be with your royal brother, King Richard. These twenty nobles I leave to Hubert, who has this day drawn as brave a bow as his grandsire did at

[1] A close-fitting jacket.

Hastings. Had his modesty not refused the trial, he would have hit the wand as well as I."

Hubert shook his head as he received with reluctance the bounty of the stranger; and Locksley, anxious to escape further observation, mixed with the crowd, and was seen no more.

The victorious archer would not, perhaps, have escaped John's attention so easily, had not that prince had other subjects of anxious and more important meditation pressing upon his mind at that instant. He called upon his chamberlain as he gave the signal for retiring from the lists, and commanded him instantly to gallop to Ashby and seek out Isaac the Jew. "Tell the dog," he said, "to send me before sundown two thousand crowns. He knows the security, but thou mayest show him this ring for a token. The rest of the money must be paid at York within six days. If he neglects, I will have the unbelieving villain's head. Look that thou pass him not on the way, for the slave was displaying his stolen finery amongst us."

So saying, the prince resumed his horse, and returned to Ashby, the whole crowd breaking up and dispersing upon his retreat.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRINCE JOHN held his high festival in the Castle of Ashby. The castle and town of Ashby at this time belonged to Roger de Quincy, Earl of Winchester, who during the period of our history was absent in the Holy Land. Prince John in the mean while occupied his castle, and disposed of his domains without scruple, and, seeking at present to dazzle men's eyes by his hospitality and magnificence, had given orders for great preparations, in order to render the banquet as splendid as possible.

The purveyors[1] of the prince, who exercised on this and other

[1] Those having in charge the providing of food.

occasions the full authority of royalty, had swept the country of all that could be collected which was esteemed fit for their master's table. Guests also were invited in great numbers; and, in the necessity in which he then found himself of courting popularity, Prince John had extended his invitation to a few distinguished Saxon and Danish families, as well as to the Norman nobility and gentry of the neighborhood.

It was the prince's intention, which he for some time maintained, to treat these unwonted guests with a courtesy to which they had been little accustomed; but, although no man with less scruple made his ordinary habits and feelings bend to his interest, it was the misfortune of this prince that his levity and petulance were perpetually breaking out, and undoing all that had been gained by his previous dissimulation.

In execution of the resolution which he had formed during his cooler moments, Prince John received Cedric and Athelstane with distinguished courtesy, and expressed his disappointment, without resentment, when the indisposition of Rowena was alleged by the former as a reason for her not attending upon his gracious summons. Cedric and Athelstane were both dressed in the ancient Saxon garb, which, although not unhandsome in itself, and in the present instance composed of costly materials, was so remote in shape and appearance from that of the other guests that Prince John took great credit to himself with Waldemar Fitzurse for refraining from laughter at a sight which the fashion of the day rendered ridiculous. Yet in the eye of sober judgment the short, close tunic and long mantle of the Saxons was a more graceful as well as a more convenient dress than the garb of the Normans, whose undergarment was a long doublet, so loose as to resemble a shirt or wagoner's frock, covered by a cloak of scanty dimensions, neither fit to defend the wearer from cold nor from rain, and the only purpose of which appeared to be to display as much fur, embroidery, and jewelry work as the ingenuity of the tailor could contrive to lay upon it.

Nevertheless, the short cloaks continued in fashion down to

the time of which we treat, and particularly among the princes of the House of Anjou. They were therefore in universal use among Prince John's courtiers, and the long mantle which formed the upper garment of the Saxons was held in proportional derision.

The guests were seated at a table which groaned under the quantity of good cheer. The numerous cooks who attended on the prince's progress, having exerted all their art in varying the forms in which the ordinary provisions were served up, had succeeded almost as well as the modern professors of the culinary art in rendering them perfectly unlike their natural appearance. Besides these dishes of domestic origin, there were various delicacies brought from foreign parts, and a quantity of rich pastry, as well as of the simnel bread[1] and wastel cakes,[2] which were only used at the tables of the highest nobility. The banquet was crowned with the richest wines, both foreign and domestic.

With sly gravity, interrupted only by private signs to each other, the Norman knights and nobles beheld the ruder demeanor of Athelstane and Cedric at a banquet to the form and fashion of which they were unaccustomed; and, while their manners were thus the subject of sarcastic observation, the untaught Saxons unwittingly transgressed several of the arbitrary rules established for the regulation of society.

Thus Cedric, who dried his hands with a towel, instead of suffering the moisture to exhale by waving them gracefully in the air, incurred more ridicule than his companion Athelstane when he swallowed to his own single share the whole of a large pasty[3] composed of the most exquisite foreign delicacies, and termed at that time a "Karum-pie." When, however, it was discovered by a serious cross-examination that the thane of Coningsburgh (or franklin, as the Normans termed him) had no idea what he had been devouring, and that he had taken the contents of the Karum-pie for larks and pigeons, whereas they were in fact bec-

[1] Fine wheat-flour bread. [2] Fine white cakes.

[3] A sort of meat pie.

caficoes[1] and nightingales, his ignorance brought him in for an ample share of ridicule.

The long feast had at length its end; and, while the goblet circulated freely, men talked of the feats of the preceding tournament,—of the unknown victor in the archery games, of the Black Knight whose self-denial had induced him to withdraw from the honors he had won, and of the gallant Ivanhoe who had so dearly bought the honors of the day. The topics were treated with military frankness, and the jest and laugh went round the hall. The brow of Prince John alone was overclouded during these discussions. Some overpowering care seemed agitating his mind, and it was only when he received occasional hints from his attendants that he seemed to take interest in what was passing around him. On such occasions he would start up, quaff a cup of wine as if to raise his spirits, and then mingle in the conversation by some observation made abruptly or at random.

"We drink this beaker," said he, "to the health of Wilfred of Ivanhoe, champion of this passage of arms, and grieve that his wound renders him absent from our board. Let all fill to the pledge, and especially Cedric of Rotherwood, the worthy father of a son so promising."

"No, my lord," replied Cedric, standing up, and placing on the table his untasted cup, "I yield not the name of son to the disobedient youth who at once despises my commands and relinquishes the manners and customs of his fathers."

"'Tis impossible," cried Prince John with well-feigned astonishment, "that so gallant a knight should be an unworthy or disobedient son!"

"Yet, my lord," answered Cedric, "so it is with this Wilfred. He left my homely dwelling to mingle with the gay nobility of your brother's court, where he learned to do those tricks of horsemanship which you prize so highly. He left it contrary to my wish and command; and in the days of Alfred that would have been termed disobedience, ay, and a crime severely punishable."

[1] Small birds, highly prized as delicacies.

"Alas!" replied Prince John with a deep sigh of affected sympathy, "since your son was a follower of my unhappy brother, it need not be inquired where or from whom he learned the lesson of filial disobedience."

Thus spake Prince John, willfully forgetting that of all the sons of Henry II., though no one was free from the charge, he himself had been most distinguished for rebellion and ingratitude to his father.

"I think," said he after a moment's pause, "that my brother proposed to confer upon his favorite the rich manor of Ivanhoe."

"He did endow him with it," answered Cedric; "nor is it my least quarrel with my son, that he stooped to hold as a feudal vassal the very domains which his fathers possessed in free and independent right."

"We shall then have your willing sanction, good Cedric," said Prince John, "to confer this fief upon a person whose dignity will not be diminished by holding land of the British Crown.—Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," he said, turning towards that baron, "I trust you will so keep the goodly barony of Ivanhoe that Sir Wilfred shall not incur his father's displeasure by again entering upon that fief."

"By St. Anthony!" answered the black-browed giant, "I will consent that your Highness shall hold me a Saxon, if either Cedric or Wilfred, or the best that ever bore English blood, shall wrench from me the gift with which your Highness has graced me."

"Whoever shall call thee Saxon, Sir Baron," replied Cedric, offended at a mode of expression by which the Normans frequently expressed their habitual contempt of the English, "will do thee an honor as great as it is undeserved."

Front-de-Bœuf would have replied, but Prince John's petulance and levity got the start.

"Assuredly," said he, "my lords, the noble Cedric speaks truth; and his race may claim precedence over us as much in the length of their pedigrees as in the longitude of their cloaks."

"They go before us indeed in the field, as deer before dogs," said Malvoisin.

"And with good right may they go before us. Forget not," said Prior Aymer, "the superior decency and decorum of their manners."

"Their singular abstemiousness and temperance," said De Bracy, forgetting the plan which promised him a Saxon bride.

"Together with the courage and conduct," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "by which they distinguished themselves at Hastings and elsewhere."

While, with smooth and smiling cheek, the courtiers each in turn followed their prince's example and aimed a shaft of ridicule at Cedric, the face of the Saxon became inflamed with passion, and he glanced his eyes fiercely from one to another, as if the quick succession of so many injuries had prevented his replying to them in turn, or like a baited bull, who, surrounded by his tormentors, is at a loss to choose from among them the immediate object of his revenge. At length he spoke in a voice half choked with passion; and, addressing himself to Prince John as the head and front of the offense which he had received, "Whatever," he said, "have been the follies of our race, a Saxon would have been held *nidering*"[1]—the most emphatic term for abject worthlessness—"who should in his own hall, and while his own wine-cup passed, have treated or suffered to be treated an unoffending guest as your Highness has this day beheld me used; and whatever was the misfortune of our fathers on the field of Hastings, those may at least be silent"—here he looked at Front-de-Bœuf and the Templar—"who have within these few hours once and again lost saddle and stirrup before the lance of a Saxon."

"By my faith, a biting jest!" said Prince John. "How like you it, sirs? Our Saxon subjects rise in spirit and courage, be-

[1] There was nothing so ignominious among the Saxons as to merit this disgraceful epithet. William the Conqueror, hated as he was by them, continued to draw a considerable army of Anglo-Saxons to his standard by threatening to stigmatize those who staid at home as *nidering*.

come shrewd in wit and bold in bearing in these unsettled times. What say ye, my lords? By this good light, I hold it best to take our galleys,[1] and return to Normandy in time."

"For fear of the Saxons!" said De Bracy, laughing, "we should need no weapons but our hunting spears to bring these boars to bay."

"A truce with your raillery, Sir Knights," said Fitzurse. — "And it were well," he added, addressing the prince, "that your Highness should assure the worthy Cedric there is no insult intended him by jests which must sound but harshly in the ear of a stranger."

"Insult!" answered Prince John, resuming his courtesy of demeanor; "I trust it will not be thought that I could mean or permit any to be offered in my presence. Here! I fill my cup to Cedric himself, since he refuses to pledge his son's health."

The cup went round amid the well-dissembled applause of the courtiers, which, however, failed to make the impression on the mind of the Saxon that had been designed. He was not naturally acute of perception, but those too much undervalued his understanding who deemed that this flattering compliment would obliterate the sense of the prior insult. He was silent, however, when the royal pledge again passed round, "To Sir Athelstane of Coningsburgh."

The knight made his obeisance, and showed his sense of the honor by draining a huge goblet in answer to it.

"And now, sirs," said Prince John, who began to be warmed with the wine which he had drunk, "having done justice to our Saxon guests, we will pray of them some requital to our courtesy. — Worthy thane," he continued, addressing Cedric, "may we pray you to name to us some Norman whose mention may least sully your mouth, and to wash down with a goblet of wine all bitterness which the sound may leave behind it?"

Fitzurse arose while Prince John spoke, and, gliding behind the seat of the Saxon, whispered to him not to omit the opportunity

[1] Ships.

of putting an end to unkindness betwixt the two races by naming Prince John. The Saxon replied not to this politic insinuation, but rising up, and filling his cup to the brim, he addressed Prince John in these words: "Your Highness has required that I should name a Norman deserving to be remembered at our banquet. This, perchance, is a hard task, since it calls on the slave to sing the praises of the master; upon the vanquished, while pressed by all the evils of conquest, to sing the praises of the conqueror. Yet I *will* name a Norman, the first in arms and in place, the best and the noblest of his race; and the lips that shall refuse to pledge me to his well-earned fame I term false and dishonored, and will so maintain them with my life. I quaff this goblet to the health of Richard the Lion-hearted."

Prince John, who had expected that his own name would have closed the Saxon's speech, started when that of his injured brother was so unexpectedly introduced. He raised mechanically the wine-cup to his lips, then instantly set it down, to view the demeanor of the company at this unexpected proposal, which many of them felt it as unsafe to oppose as to comply with. Some of them, ancient and experienced courtiers, closely imitated the example of the prince himself, raising the goblet to their lips, and again replacing it before them. There were many who, with a more generous feeling, exclaimed, "Long live King Richard, and may he be speedily restored to us!" and some few, among whom were Front-de-Bœuf and the Templar, in sullen disdain suffered their goblets to stand untasted before them; but no man ventured directly to gainsay a pledge filled to the health of the reigning monarch.

Having enjoyed his triumph for about a minute, Cedric said to his companion, "Up, noble Athelstane! we have remained here long enough, since we have requited the hospitable courtesy of Prince John's banquet. Those who wish to know further of our rude Saxon manners must henceforth seek us in the homes of our fathers, since we have seen enough of royal banquets and enough of Norman courtesy."

So saying, he arose and left the banqueting-room, followed by Athelstane and by several other guests, who, partaking of the Saxon lineage, held themselves insulted by the sarcasms of Prince John and his courtiers.

"By the bones of St. Thomas!" said Prince John as they retreated, "the Saxon churls have borne off the best of the day, and have retreated with triumph."

"*Conclamatum est, poculatum est*," said Prior Aymer; "we have drunk and we have shouted: it were time we left our wine-flagons."

"The monk is in a hurry to depart," said De Bracy.

"Even so, Sir Knight," replied the abbot; "for I must move several miles forward this evening upon my homeward journey."

"They are breaking up," said the prince in a whisper to Fitzurse. "Their fears anticipate the event, and this coward prior is the first to shrink from me."

"Fear not, my lord," said Waldemar. "I will show him such reasons as shall induce him to join us when we hold our meeting at York. — Sir Prior," he said, "I must speak with you in private before you mount your palfrey."

The other guests were now fast dispersing, with the exception of those immediately attached to Prince John's faction, and his retinue.

"This, then, is the result of your advice," said the prince, turning an angry countenance upon Fitzurse: "that I should be bearded at my own board by a drunken Saxon churl, and that, on the mere sound of my brother's name, men should fall off from me as if I had the leprosy!"

"Have patience, sir," replied his counselor. "I might retort your accusation, and blame the inconsiderate levity which foiled my design and misled your own better judgment; but this is no time for recrimination. De Bracy and I will instantly go among these shuffling cowards, and convince them they have gone too far to recede."

"It will be in vain," said Prince John, pacing the apartment

with disordered steps, and expressing himself with an agitation to which the wine he had drunk partly contributed. "It will be in vain. They have seen the handwriting on the wall; they have marked the paw of the lion in the sand, they have heard his approaching roar shake the wood; nothing will reanimate their courage."

"Would to God," said Fitzurse to De Bracy, "that aught could reanimate his own! His brother's very name is an ague to him. Unhappy are the counselors of a prince who wants fortitude and perseverance alike in good and in evil."

CHAPTER XV.

NO spider ever took more pains to repair the shattered meshes of his web than did Waldemar Fitzurse to reunite and combine the scattered members of Prince John's cabal.[1]

Arguments adapted to the peculiar circumstances of those whom he addressed had weight with the nobles of Prince John's faction. Most of them consented to attend the proposed meeting at York, for the purpose of making general arrangements for placing the crown upon the head of Prince John.

It was late at night when, worn out and exhausted with his various exertions, however gratified with the result, Fitzurse, returning to the Castle of Ashby, met with De Bracy, who had exchanged his banqueting garments for a short green kirtle, with hose of the same cloth and color, a leathern cap or headpiece, a short sword, a horn slung over his shoulder, a longbow in his hand, and a bundle of arrows stuck in his belt. Had Fitzurse met this figure in an outer apartment, he would have passed him without notice, as one of the yeomen of the guard; but, finding him in the inner hall, he looked at him with more attention, and recognized the Norman knight in the dress of an English yeoman.

[1] Faction.

"What mummery is this, De Bracy?" said Fitzurse somewhat angrily. "Is this a time for Christmas gambols and quaint maskings, when the fate of our master, Prince John, is on the very verge of decision? Why hast thou not been, like me, among these heartless cravens, whom the very name of King Richard terrifies, as it is said to do the children of the Saracens?"

"I have been attending to mine own business," answered De Bracy calmly, "as you, Fitzurse, have been minding yours."

"I minding mine own business!" echoed Waldemar. "I have been engaged in that of Prince John, our joint patron."

"As if thou hadst any other reason for that, Waldemar," said De Bracy, "than the promotion of thine own individual interest! Come, Fitzurse, we know each other. Ambition is thy pursuit, pleasure is mine, and they become our different ages. Of Prince John thou thinkest as I do, — that he is too weak to be a determined monarch, too tyrannical to be an easy monarch, too insolent and presumptuous to be a popular monarch, and too fickle and timid to be long a monarch of any kind. But he is a monarch by whom Fitzurse and De Bracy hope to rise and thrive; and therefore you aid him with your policy, and I with the lances of my Free Companions."

"A hopeful auxiliary," said Fitzurse impatiently; "playing the fool in the very moment of utter necessity. What on earth dost thou purpose by this absurd disguise at a moment so urgent?"

"To get me a wife," answered De Bracy coolly. "I mean to purvey me a wife. I will carry off the lovely Rowena."

"Art thou mad, De Bracy?" said Fitzurse. "Bethink thee, that, though the men be Saxons, they are rich and powerful, and regarded with the more respect by their countrymen that wealth and honor are but the lot of few of Saxon descent."

"And should belong to none," said De Bracy. "The work of the Conquest should be completed."

"This is no time for it," said Fitzurse. "The approaching crisis renders the favor of the multitude indispensable, and Prince John cannot refuse justice to any one who injures their favorites."

"Let him grant it if he dare," said De Bracy. "He will soon see the difference betwixt the support of such a lusty lot of spears as mine and that of a heartless mob of Saxon churls. Yet I mean no immediate discovery of myself. Seem I not in this garb as bold a forester as ever blew horn? The blame of the violence shall rest with the outlaws of the Yorkshire forests. I have sure spies on the Saxons' motions. To-night they sleep in the convent of St. Wittol, or Withold, or whatever they call that churl of a Saxon saint at Burton-on-Trent.[1] Next day's march brings them within our reach, and, falcon-ways,[2] we swoop on them at once. Presently after I will appear in mine own shape, play the courteous knight, rescue the unfortunate and afflicted fair one, conduct her to Front-de-Bœuf's castle, or to Normandy if it should be necessary, and produce her not again to her kindred until she be the bride and dame of Maurice de Bracy."

"A marvelously sage plan," said Fitzurse, "and, as I think, not entirely of thine own device. Come, be frank, De Bracy, who aided thee in the invention, and who is to assist in the execution? for, as I think, thine own band lies as far off as York."

"Marry, if thou must needs know," said De Bracy, "it was the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert that shaped out the enterprise. He is to aid me in the onslaught, and he and his followers will personate the outlaws from whom my valorous arm is, after changing my garb, to rescue the lady."

"By my halidom," said Fitzurse, "the plan was worthy of your united wisdom! And thy prudence, De Bracy, is most especially manifested in the project of leaving the lady in the hands of thy worthy confederate. Thou mayst, I think, succeed in taking her from her Saxon friends, but how thou wilt rescue her afterwards from the clutches of Bois-Guilbert seems considerably more doubtful. He is a falcon well accustomed to pounce on a partridge, and to hold his prey fast."

1 A town on the Trent River, in the counties of Stafford and Derby

2 Like the swift flight of a falcon.

"He is a Templar," said De Bracy, "and cannot therefore rival me in my plan of wedding this heiress."

"Then, since naught that I can say," said Fitzurse, "will put this folly from thy imagination (for well I know the obstinacy of thy disposition), at least waste as little time as possible: let not thy folly be lasting as well as untimely."

"I tell thee," answered De Bracy, "that it will be the work of a few hours; and I shall be at York, at the head of my daring and valorous fellows, as ready to support any bold design as thy policy can be to form one. But I hear my comrades assembling, and the steeds stamping and neighing in the outer court. Farewell! I go, like a true knight, to win the smiles of beauty."

"Like a true knight!" repeated Fitzurse, looking after him: "like a fool, I should say, or like a child, who will leave the most serious and needful occupation to chase the down of the thistle that drives past him. But it is with such tools that I must work; and for whose advantage? For that of a prince as likely to be an ungrateful master as he has already proved a rebellious son and an unnatural brother. But he—he, too, is but one of the tools with which I labor; and, proud as he is, should he presume to separate his interest from mine, this is a secret which he shall soon learn."

The meditations of the statesman were here interrupted by the voice of the prince from an interior apartment, calling out, "Noble Waldemar Fitzurse!" and, with bonnet doffed, the future chancellor (for to such high preferment did the wily Norman aspire) hastened to receive the orders of the future sovereign.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE reader cannot have forgotten that the event of the tournament was decided by the exertions of an unknown knight, *Le Noir Faineant.* This knight had left the field abruptly when the victory was achieved, and, when he was called upon

to receive the reward of his valor, he was nowhere to be found. In the mean time, while summoned by heralds and by trumpets, the knight was holding his course northward, avoiding all frequented paths, and taking the shortest road through the woodlands. He paused for the night at a small hostelry[1] lying out of the ordinary route, where, however, he obtained from a wandering minstrel news of the event of the tourney.

On the next morning the knight departed early, with the intention of making a long journey; the condition of his horse, which he had carefully spared during the preceding morning, being such as enabled him to travel far without the necessity of much repose. Yet his purpose was baffled by the devious paths through which he rode, so that when evening closed upon him he only found himself on the frontiers of the West Riding of Yorkshire. By this time both horse and man required refreshment; and it became necessary, moreover, to look out for some place in which they might spend the night, which was now fast approaching.

The place where the traveler found himself seemed unpropitious for obtaining either shelter or refreshment; and he felt dissatisfied, therefore, when, looking around, he found himself deeply involved in woods, through which indeed there were many open glades and some paths, but such as seemed only formed by the numerous herds of cattle which grazed in the forest, or by the animals of chase and the hunters who made prey of them.

The sun, by which the knight had chiefly directed his course, had now sunk behind the Derbyshire[2] hills on his left, and every effort which he might take to pursue his journey was as likely to lead him out of his road as to advance him on his route. After having in vain endeavored to select the most beaten path, in hopes it might lead to the cottage of some herdsman or the silvan lodge of a forester, and having repeatedly found himself totally unable to determine on a choice, the knight resolved to trust to the sagacity of his horse, experience having on former occa-

[1] Inn. [2] A county of north central England.

sions made him acquainted with the wonderful talent possessed by these animals for extricating themselves and their riders on such emergencies.

The good steed, grievously fatigued with so long a day's journey under a rider cased in mail, had no sooner found by the slackened reins that he was abandoned to his own guidance than he seemed to assume new strength and spirit; and whereas formerly he had scarce replied to the spur otherwise than by a groan, he now, as if proud of the confidence reposed in him, pricked up his ears, and assumed of his own accord a more lively motion. The path which the animal adopted turned off from the course pursued by the knight during the day; but, as the horse seemed confident in his choice, the rider abandoned himself to his discretion.

He was justified by the event, for the footpath soon after appeared a little wider and more worn, and the tinkle of a small bell gave the knight to understand that he was in the vicinity of some chapel or hermitage.

Accordingly, he soon reached an open plat of turf, on the opposite side of which a rock, rising abruptly from a gently sloping plain, offered its gray and weather-beaten front to the traveler. Ivy mantled its sides in some places; and in others oaks and holly-bushes, whose roots found nourishment in the cliffs of the crag, waved over the precipices below, like the plumage of the warrior over his steel helmet, giving grace to that whose chief expression was terror. At the bottom of the rock, and leaning, as it were, against it, was constructed a rude hut, built chiefly of the trunks of trees felled in the neighboring forest, and secured against the weather by having its crevices stuffed with moss mingled with clay. The stem of a young fir-tree lopped of its branches, with a piece of wood tied across near the top, was planted upright by the door as a rude emblem of the holy cross. At a little distance on the right hand a fountain of the purest water trickled out of the rock, and was received in a hollow stone which labor had formed into a rustic basin. Escaping from

thence, the stream murmured down the descent by a channel which its course had long worn, and so wandered through the little plain to lose itself in the neighboring wood.

Beside this fountain were the ruins of a very small chapel, of which the roof had partly fallen in. The building, when entire, had never been above sixteen feet long by twelve feet in breadth; and the roof, low in proportion, rested upon four concentric[1] arches which sprung from the four corners of the building, each supported upon a short and heavy pillar. The ribs of two of these arches remained, though the roof had fallen down betwixt them: over the others it remained entire. The entrance to this ancient place of devotion was under a very low, round arch, ornamented by several courses of that zigzag molding, resembling shark's teeth, which appears so often in the more ancient Saxon architecture. A belfry rose above the porch on four small pillars, within which hung the green and weather-beaten bell, the feeble sounds of which had been some time before heard by the Black Knight.

The whole peaceful and quiet scene lay glimmering in twilight before the eyes of the traveler, giving him good assurance of lodging for the night, since it was a special duty of those hermits who dwelt in the woods to exercise hospitality towards benighted or bewildered passengers.

Accordingly the knight took no time to consider minutely the particulars which we have detailed, but thanking St. Julian (the patron of travelers), who had sent him good harborage, he leaped from his horse, and assailed the door of the hermitage with the butt of his lance, in order to arouse attention and gain admittance.

It was some time before he obtained any answer, and the reply, when made, was unpropitious.

"Pass on, whosoever thou art," was the answer given by a deep, hoarse voice from within the hut, "and disturb not the servant of God and St. Dunstan in his evening devotions."

[1] Having the same center.

"Worthy father," answered the knight, "here is a poor wanderer bewildered in these woods, who gives thee the opportunity of exercising thy charity and hospitality."

"Good brother," replied the inhabitant of the hermitage, "it has pleased Our Lady and St. Dunstan to destine me for the object of those virtues, instead of the exercise thereof. I have no provisions here which even a dog would share with me, and a horse of any tenderness of nurture would despise my couch: pass, therefore, on thy way, and God speed thee!"

"But how," replied the knight, "is it possible for me to find my way through such a wood as this when darkness is coming on? I pray you, reverend father, as you are a Christian, to undo your door and at least point out to me my road."

"And I pray you, good Christian brother," replied the anchorite,[1] "to disturb me no more. You have already interrupted one *pater*,[2] two *aves*,[3] and a *credo*,[4] which I, miserable sinner that I am, should, according to my vow, have said before moonrise."

"The road, the road!" vociferated the knight; "give me directions for the road, if I am to expect no more from thee."

"The road," replied the hermit, "is easy to hit. The path from the wood leads to a morass, and from thence to a ford, which, as the rains have abated, may now be passable. When thou hast crossed the ford, thou wilt take care of thy footing up the left bank, as it is somewhat precipitous; and the path, which hangs over the river, has lately, as I learn (for I seldom leave the duties of my chapel), given way in sundry places. Thou wilt then keep straight forward"—

"A broken path, a precipice, a ford, and a morass!" said the knight, interrupting him. "Sir Hermit, if you were the holi-

[1] Anchoret; a religious recluse or hermit.

[2] Paternoster; the Lord's Prayer.

[3] Ave Maria! ("Hail, Mary!"); a prayer in the devotional service of the Romish Church, termed the "Angelic Salutation."

[4] The Apostles' Creed, called so from the first word in the Latin version, beginning "*Credo in Deum.*"

est that ever wore beard or told[1] bead, you shall scarce prevail on me to hold this road to-night. I tell thee that thou, who livest by the charity of the country—ill deserved, as I doubt it is—hast no right to refuse shelter to the wayfarer when in distress. Either open the door quickly, or, by the rood, I will beat it down and make entry for myself."

"Friend wayfarer," replied the hermit, "be not importunate. If thou puttest me to use the carnal weapon in mine own defense, it will be e'en the worse for you."

At this moment a distant noise of barking and growling, which the traveler had for some time heard, became extremely loud and furious, and made the knight suppose that the hermit, alarmed by his threat of making forcible entry, had called the dogs who made this clamor to aid him in his defense, out of some inner recess in which they had been kenneled. Incensed at this preparation on the hermit's part for making good his inhospitable purpose, the knight struck the door so furiously with his foot that posts as well as staples shook with violence.

The anchorite, not caring again to expose his door to a similar shock, now called out aloud, "Patience, patience! Spare thy strength, good traveler, and I will presently undo the door, though it may be my doing so will be little to thy pleasure."

The door, accordingly, was opened; and the hermit,—a large, strong-built man,—in his sackcloth[2] gown and hood, girt with a rope of rushes, stood before the knight. He had in one hand a lighted torch, or link; and in the other, a baton of crab-tree, so thick and heavy that it might well be termed a club. Two large, shaggy dogs, half greyhound, half mastiff, stood ready to rush upon the traveler as soon as the door should be opened; but, when the torch glanced upon the lofty crest and golden spurs of the knight who stood without, the hermit, altering probably his original intentions, repressed the rage of his auxiliaries, and,

[1] Numbered; referring to the custom of numbering or telling off beads on the rosary as prayers were said.

[2] Cloth of a coarse texture.

changing his tone to a sort of churlish courtesy, invited the knight to enter his hut, making excuse for his unwillingness to open his lodge after sunset by alleging the multitude of robbers and outlaws who were abroad, and who gave no honor to Our Lady or St. Dunstan, nor to those holy men who spent life in their service.

"The poverty of your cell, good father," said the knight, looking around him, and seeing nothing but a bed of leaves, a crucifix rudely carved in oak, a missal,[1] with a rough-hewn table and two stools, and one or two clumsy articles of furniture — "the poverty of your cell should seem a sufficient defense against any risk of thieves, not to mention the aid of two trusty dogs, large and strong enough, I think, to pull down a stag, and of course to match with most men."

"The good keeper of the forest," said the hermit, "hath allowed me the use of these animals to protect my solitude until the times shall mend."

Having said this, he fixed his torch in a twisted branch of iron which served for a candlestick; and placing the oaken trivet[2] before the embers of the fire, which he refreshed with some dry wood, he placed a stool upon one side of the table, and beckoned to the knight to do the same upon the other.

They sat down, and gazed with great gravity at each other, each thinking in his heart that he had seldom seen a stronger or more athletic figure than was placed opposite to him.

"Reverend hermit," said the knight, after looking long and fixedly at his host, "were it not to interrupt your devout meditations, I would pray to know three things of your Holiness, — first, where I am to put my horse; secondly, what I can have for supper; thirdly, where I am to take up my couch for the night."

"I will reply to you," said the hermit, "with my finger, it being against my rule to speak by words where signs can answer

[1] The office book of the Church, containing the liturgy of the mass, or *missa* (the sacramental service of the Roman Catholic Church).

[2] A table with three legs.

the purpose." So saying, he pointed successively to two corners of the hut. "Your stable," said he, "is there; your bed, there; and," reaching down a platter with two handfuls of parched pease upon it from the neighboring shelf, and placing it upon the table, he added, "your supper is here."

The knight shrugged his shoulders, and, leaving the hut, brought in his horse (which in the interim he had fastened to a tree), unsaddled him with much attention, and spread upon the steed's weary back his own mantle.

The hermit was apparently somewhat moved to compassion by the anxiety as well as address which the stranger displayed in tending his horse; for, muttering something about provender left for the keeper's palfrey, he dragged out of a recess a bundle of forage, which he spread before the knight's charger, and immediately afterwards shook down a quantity of dried fern in the corner which he had assigned for the rider's couch. The knight returned him thanks for his courtesy; and, this duty done, both resumed their seats by the table, whereon stood the trencher of pease placed between them. The hermit, after a long grace, which had once been Latin, but of which original language few traces remained, excepting here and there the long rolling termination of some word or phrase, set example to his guest by modestly putting into a very large mouth, furnished with teeth which might have ranked with those of a boar both in sharpness and whiteness, some three or four dried pease, — a miserable grist, as it seemed, for so large and able a mill.

The knight, in order to follow so laudable an example, laid aside his helmet, his corselet,[1] and the greater part of his armor, and showed to the hermit a head thick-curled with yellow hair, high features, blue eyes remarkably bright and sparkling, a mouth well formed, having an upper lip clothed with mustaches darker than his hair, and bearing altogether the look of a bold, daring, and enterprising man, with which his strong form well corresponded.

[1] Armor (breastplate and backpiece) for the body.

The hermit, as if wishing to answer to the confidence of his guest, threw back his cowl,[1] and showed a round bullet head belonging to a man in the prime of life. His close-shaven crown, surrounded by a circle of stiff curled black hair, had something the appearance of a parish pinfold[2] begirt by its high hedge. The features expressed nothing of monastic austerity: on the contrary, it was a bold, bluff countenance, with broad black eyebrows, a well-turned forehead, and cheeks as round and vermilion as those of a trumpeter, from which descended a long and curly black beard. Such a visage, joined to the brawny form of the holy man, spoke rather of sirloins and haunches than of pease and pulse. This incongruity did not escape the guest. After he had with great difficulty accomplished the mastication of a mouthful of the dried pease, he found it absolutely necessary to request his pious entertainer to furnish him with some liquor, who replied to his request by placing before him a large can of the purest water from the fountain.

"It is from the well of St. Dunstan," said he, "in which, betwixt sun and sun, he baptized five hundred heathen Danes[3] and Britons, blessed be his name!" and, applying his black beard to the pitcher, he took a draught much more moderate in quantity than his encomium seemed to warrant.

"It seems to me, reverend father," said the knight, "that the small morsels which you eat, together with this holy but somewhat thin beverage, have thriven with you marvelously. You appear a man more fit to win the ram at a wrestling match, or the ring at a bout at quarter-staff, or the bucklers at a sword-play, than to linger out your time in this desolate wilderness, saying masses, and living upon parched pease and cold water."

"Sir Knight," answered the hermit, "it has pleased Our Lady and my patron saint to bless the pittance to which I restrain my-

[1] Hood of a monk's gown. [2] A pen for stray cattle.

[3] The Scandinavian sea-rovers whose inroads and settlements in England cover a considerable portion of its history from about the eighth century to the eleventh century.

self, even as the pulse and water were blessed to the children Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who drank the same rather than the wine and meats which were appointed them by the King of the Saracens."

"Holy father," said the knight, "upon whose countenance it hath pleased Heaven to work such a miracle, permit a sinful layman to crave thy name."

"Thou mayst call me," answered the hermit, "the Clerk[1] of Copmanhurst, for so I am termed in these parts. They add, it is true, the epithet 'holy,' but I stand not upon that, as being unworthy of such addition. And now, valiant knight, may I pray ye for the name of my honorable guest?"

"Truly," said the knight, "Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst, men call me in these parts the Black Knight. Many, sir, add to it the epithet of 'Sluggard,' whereby I am noway ambitious to be distinguished."

The hermit could scarcely forbear from smiling at his guest's reply.

"I see," said he, "Sir Sluggish Knight, that thou art a man of prudence and of counsel; and, moreover, I see that my poor monastic fare likes thee not, accustomed perhaps, as thou hast been, to courts and camps, and the luxuries of cities; and now I bethink me, Sir Sluggard, that when the charitable keeper of this forest-walk left these dogs for my protection, and also those bundles of forage, he left me also some food, which being unfit for my use, the very recollection of it had escaped me amid my more weighty meditations."

"I dare be sworn he did so," said the knight. "I was convinced that there was better food in the cell,[2] Holy Clerk, since you first doffed your cowl. Your keeper is ever a jovial fellow; and none who beheld thy grinders contending with these pease, and thy throat flooded with this ungenial element, could see thee doomed to such horse-provender and horse-beverage" (pointing

[1] Latin, *clericus* ("a priest"); Anglo-Saxon, *clerc* ("a clerk, a priest").

[2] Usually a small house attached to a convent or monastery.

to the provisions upon the table), "and refrain from mending thy cheer. Let us see the keeper's bounty, therefore, without delay."

The hermit cast a wistful look upon the knight, in which there was a sort of comic expression of hesitation, as if uncertain how far he should act prudently in trusting his guest. There was, however, as much of bold frankness in the knight's countenance as was possible to be expressed by features. His smile, too, had something in it irresistibly comic, and gave an assurance of faith and loyalty with which his host could not refrain from sympathizing.

After a mute glance or two, the hermit went to the farther side of the hut, and opened a hutch,[1] which was concealed with great care and some ingenuity. Out of the recesses of a dark closet, into which this aperture gave admittance, he brought a large pasty, baked in a pewter platter of unusual dimensions. This mighty dish he placed before his guest, who, using his poniard to cut it open, lost no time in making himself acquainted with its contents.

"How long is it since the good keeper has been here?" said the knight to his host, after having swallowed several hasty morsels of this reënforcement to the hermit's good cheer.

"About two months," answered the father hastily.

"By the true Lord," answered the knight, "everything in your hermitage is miraculous, Holy Clerk; for I would have been sworn that the fat buck which furnished this venison had been running on foot within the week."

The hermit was somewhat discountenanced by this observation; and, moreover, he had made but a poor figure while gazing on the diminution of the pasty, on which his guest was making desperate inroads, — a warfare in which his previous profession of abstinence left him no pretext for joining.

"I have been in Palestine, Sir Clerk," said the knight, stopping short of a sudden, "and I bethink me it is a custom there that every host who entertains a guest shall assure him of the

[1] A chest or bin for storing away things.

wholesomeness of his food by partaking of it along with him. Far be it from me to suspect so holy a man of aught inhospitable; nevertheless I will be highly bound to you would you comply with this Eastern custom."

"To ease your unnecessary scruples, Sir Knight, I will for once depart from my rule," replied the hermit; and, as there were no forks in those days, his clutches were instantly in the bowels of the pasty.

The ice of ceremony being once broken, it seemed matter of rivalry between the guest and the entertainer which should display the best appetite; and although the former had probably fasted longest, yet the hermit fairly surpassed him.

"Holy Clerk," said the knight when his hunger was appeased, "I would gage my good horse yonder against a zecchin, that that same honest keeper to whom we are obliged for the venison has left thee a stoup[1] of wine, or a runlet[2] of canary,[3] or some such trifle, by way of ally to this noble pasty. This would be a circumstance, doubtless, totally unworthy to dwell in the memory of so rigid an anchorite; yet I think, were you to search yonder crypt[4] once more, you would find that I am right in my conjecture."

The hermit replied by a grin, and, returning to the hutch, he produced a leathern bottle which might contain about four quarts. He also brought forth two large drinking-cups made out of the horn of the urus,[5] and hooped with silver. Having made this goodly provision for washing down the supper, he seemed to think no further ceremonious scruple necessary on his part; but filling both cups, and saying, in the Saxon fashion, "*Waes hael*,[6] Sir Sluggish Knight!" he emptied his own at a draught.

1 A vessel for liquor; a beaker.

2 Rundlet; a small barrel or cask.

3 A kind of wine from the Canary Islands.

4 Generally a vault beneath a church, either for purposes of burial or as an underground chapel or oratory; here used in metaphorical allusion to the bin.

5 An extinct bovine animal having very large horns.

6 "Be whole, be in health;" that is, "I drink your health." (Compare Note 3, p. 45.)

"*Drink hael*,[1] Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst!" answered the warrior, and did his host reason[2] in a similar brimmer.[3]

"Holy Clerk," said the stranger, after the first cup was thus swallowed, "I cannot but marvel that a man possessed of such thews and sinews as thine, and who therewithal shows the talent of so goodly a trencherman,[4] should think of abiding by himself in this wilderness. In my judgment, you are fitter to keep a castle or a fort, eating of the fat and drinking of the strong, than to live here upon pulse and water, or even upon the charity of the keeper. At least, were I as thou, I should find myself both disport[5] and plenty out of the King's deer. There is many a goodly herd in these forests, and a buck will never be missed that goes to the use of St. Dunstan's chaplain."

"Sir Sluggish Knight," replied the clerk, "these are dangerous words, and I pray you to forbear them. I am true hermit to the King and law, and, were I to spoil my liege's[6] game, I should be sure of the prison, and, an my gown saved me not, were in some peril of hanging."

"Nevertheless, were I as thou," said the knight, "I would take my walk by moonlight, when foresters and keepers were warm in bed, and ever and anon, as I pattered[7] my prayers, I would let fly a shaft among the herds of dun[8] deer that feed in the glades. Resolve me, Holy Clerk, hast thou never practiced such a pastime?"

"Friend Sluggard," answered the hermit, "thou hast seen all that can concern thee of my housekeeping, and something more than he deserves who takes up his quarters by violence. Credit me, it is better to enjoy the good which God sends thee than to be impertinently curious how it comes. Fill thy cup, and welcome; and do not, I pray thee, by further impertinent inquiries,

[1] "Drink health," "I drink to you."
[2] To do one reason is to do what is desired; to give satisfaction.
[3] A bowl full to the top.
[4] A table comrade, usually in the sense of a heavy eater.
[5] Diversion. [6] Sovereign's. [7] Muttered. [8] A dull brown color.

put me to show that thou couldst hardly have made good thy lodging had I been earnest to oppose thee."

"By my faith," said the knight, "thou makest me more curious than ever! Thou art the most mysterious hermit I ever met; and I will know more of thee ere we part. As for thy threats, know, holy man, thou speakest to one whose trade it is to find out danger wherever it is to be met with."

"Sir Sluggish Knight, I drink to thee," said the hermit, "respecting thy valor much, but deeming wondrous slightly of thy discretion. If thou wilt take equal arms with me, I will give thee, in all friendship and brotherly love, such sufficing penance and complete absolution that thou shalt not for the next twelve months sin the sin of excess and curiosity."

The knight pledged him, and desired him to name his weapons.

"There is none," replied the hermit, "from the scissors[1] of Delilah and the tenpenny nail of Jael[2] to the scimiter of Goliah, at which I am not a match for thee. But if I am to make the election, what sayest thou, good friend, to these trinkets?"

Thus speaking, he opened another hutch, and took out from it a couple of broadswords and bucklers, such as were used by the yeomanry of the period. The knight, who watched his motions, observed that this second place of concealment was furnished with two or three good longbows, a crossbow, a bundle of bolts for the latter, and half a dozen sheaves of arrows for the former. A harp and other matters of very uncanonical[3] appearance were also visible when this dark recess was opened.

"I promise thee, brother clerk," said he, "I will ask thee no more offensive questions. The contents of that cupboard are an answer to all my inquiries; and I see a weapon there" (here he

[1] The scissors with which Delilah sheared away the hair and strength of Samson, betraying him to the Philistines.

[2] Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, after the defeat of Jabin's army by Deborah and Barak, killed Sisera, the general who fled to her tent, by driving a "nail of the tent" through his temples (see Judges iv. 17–21).

[3] Not in accordance with church regulations.

stooped and took out the harp) "on which I would more gladly prove my skill with thee than at the sword and buckler."

"I hope, Sir Knight," said the hermit, "thou hast given no good reason for thy surname of the Sluggard. I do promise thee I suspect thee grievously. Nevertheless, thou art my guest, and I will not put thy manhood to the proof without thine own free will. Sit thee down, then, and fill thy cup. Let us drink, sing, and be merry. If thou knowest ever a good lay, thou shalt be welcome to a nook[1] of pasty at Copmanhurst so long as I serve the chapel of St. Dunstan, which, please God, shall be till I change my gray covering for one of green turf. But come, fill a flagon,[2] for it will crave[3] some time to tune the harp; and naught pitches the voice and sharpens the ear like a cup of wine. For my part, I love to feel the grape at my very finger-ends, before they make the harp-strings tinkle."[4]

CHAPTER XVII.

NOTWITHSTANDING the prescription of the genial hermit, with which his guest willingly complied, he found it no easy matter to bring the harp to harmony.

"Methinks, holy father," said he, "the instrument wants one string, and the rest have been somewhat misused."

"Ay, markst thou that?" replied the hermit. "That shows thee a master of the craft. Wine and wassail," he added, gravely casting up his eyes — "all the fault of wine and wassail! I told Allan-a-Dale,[5] the northern minstrel, that he would damage the harp if he touched it after the seventh cup, but he would not be controlled. Friend, I drink to thy successful performance."

[1] Piece. [2] A good-sized drinking-vessel. [3] Require.

[4] All readers must recognize, in the Clerk of Copmanhurst, Friar Tuck, the buxom confessor of Robin Hood's gang.

[5] One of Robin Hood's band.

So saying, he took off his cup with much gravity, at the same time shaking his head at the intemperance of the Scottish harper.

The knight, in the mean time, had brought the strings into some order, and after a short prelude asked his host whether he would choose a *sirvente* in the language of *oc*, or a *lai* in the language of *oui*, or a *virelai*, or a ballad in the vulgar English.[1]

"A ballad,[2] a ballad," said the hermit, "against all the *ocs* and *ouis* of France. Downright English am I, Sir Knight, and downright English was my patron St. Dunstan, and scorned *oc* and *oui* as he would have scorned the parings of the Devil's hoof. Downright English alone shall be sung in this cell."

"I will assay,[3] then," said the knight, "a ballad composed by a Saxon gleeman,[4] whom I knew in Holy Land."

It speedily appeared that if the knight was not a complete master of the minstrel art, his taste for it had at least been cultivated under the best instructors. Art had taught him to soften the faults of a voice which had little compass, and was naturally rough rather than mellow, and, in short, had done all that culture can do in supplying natural deficiencies. His performance, therefore, might have been termed very respectable by abler judges than the hermit, especially as the knight threw into the notes, now a degree of spirit, and now of plaintive enthusiasm, which gave force and energy to the verses which he sung.

[1] The realm of France was divided betwixt the Norman and Teutonic race, who spoke the language in which the word "yes" is pronounced as *oui*, and the inhabitants of the southern regions, whose speech, bearing some affinity to the Italian, pronounced the same word *oc*. The poets of the former race were called "minstrels," and their poems "lays;" those of the latter were termed "troubadours," and their compositions "sirventes" and other names.

[2] A kind of popular form of verse, of a narrative character, and adapted for singing or recitation.

[3] Try.

[4] The minstrel of the Saxons; Anglo-Saxon *gleoman* (from *gleo*, "joy," "mirth"): hence the gleeman was the joy-man, the mirth-man, the man who at feasts lightened the heart with his song.

The Crusader's Return.

1.

High deeds achieved of knightly fame,
From Palestine the champion came.
The cross upon his shoulders borne,
Battle and blast had dimmed and torn;
Each dint upon his battered shield
Was token of a foughten field;
And thus, beneath his lady's bower,
He sung, as fell the twilight hour,—

2.

"Joy to the fair! — thy knight behold,
Returned from yonder land of gold;
No wealth he brings, nor wealth can need,
Save his good arms and battle-steed,
His spurs to dash against a foe,
His lance and sword to lay him low;
Such all the trophies of his toil,
Such — and the hope of Tekla's smile!

3.

"Joy to the fair! whose constant knight
Her favor fired to feats of might;
Unnoted shall she not remain,
Where meet the bright and noble train;
Minstrel shall sing and herald tell —
'Mark yonder maid of beauty well,
'Tis she for whose bright eyes was won
The listed field at Askalon!

4.

"'Note well her smile! — it edged the blade
Which fifty wives to widows made,
When, vain his strength and Mahound's spell,
Iconium's turbaned Soldan fell.

Seest thou her locks whose sunny glow
Half shows, half shades, her neck of snow?
Twines not of them one golden thread
But for its sake a Paynim bled.'

5.

"Joy to the fair! — my name unknown,
Each deed, and all its praise thine own:
Then, oh! unbar this churlish gate,
The night dew falls, the hour is late.
Inured to Syria's glowing breath,
I feel the north breeze chill as death;
Let grateful love quell maiden shame,
And grant him bliss who brings thee fame."

During this performance the hermit demeaned himself much like a first-rate critic of the present day at a new opera. He reclined back upon his seat with his eyes half shut. Now, folding his hands and twisting his thumbs, he seemed absorbed in attention; and anon, balancing his expanded palms, he gently flourished them in time to the music. At one or two favorite cadences he threw in a little assistance of his own, where the knight's voice seemed unable to carry the air so high as his worshipful taste approved. When the song was ended, the anchorite emphatically declared it a good one, and well sung. Then he reached the harp, and entertained his guest with the following characteristic song, to a sort of derry-down chorus, appropriate to an old English ditty:—

The Barefooted Friar.

1.

I'll give thee, good fellow, a twelvemonth or twain
To search Europe through, from Byzantium to Spain;
But ne'er shall you find, should you search till you tire,
So happy a man as the Barefooted Friar.

2.

Your knight for his lady pricks forth in career,
And is brought home at even-song pricked through with a spear,
I confess him in haste, for his lady desires
No comfort on earth save the Barefooted Friar's.

3.

Your monarch? — Pshaw! many a prince has been known
To barter his robes for our cowl and our gown;
But which of us e'er felt the idle desire
To exchange for a crown the gray hood of a friar!

4.

The Friar has walked out, and where'er he has gone
The land and its fatness is marked for his own;
He can roam where he lists, he can stop when he tires,
For every man's house is the Barefooted Friar's.

5.

He's expected at noon, and no wight till he comes
May profane the great chair, or the porridge of plums;
For the best of the cheer, and the seat by the fire,
Is the undenied right of the Barefooted Friar.

6.

He's expected at night, and the pasty's made hot,
They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black pot;
And the goodwife would wish the goodman in the mire
Ere he lacked a soft pillow, the Barefooted Friar.

7.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord, and the cope,
The dread of the Devil, and trust of the Pope;
For to gather life's roses, unscathed by the brier,
Is granted alone to the Barefooted Friar.

"By my troth," said the knight, "thou hast sung well and lustily, and in high praise of thine order."

"I serve the duty of my chapel duly and truly," answered the hermit,—"two masses daily, morning and evening, primes, noons, and vespers, *aves*, *credos*, *paters*"—

"Excepting moonlight nights, when the venison is in season," said his guest.

"*Exceptis excipiendis*,"[1] replied the hermit, "as our old abbot taught me to say when impertinent laymen should ask me if I kept every punctilio[2] of mine order."

"True, holy father," said the knight; "but keep an eye on exceptions."

Fast grew the mirth of the parties, and many a song was exchanged betwixt them, when their revels were interrupted by a loud knocking at the door of the hermitage.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Cedric the Saxon saw his son drop down senseless in the lists at Ashby, his first impulse was to order him into the custody and care of his own attendants, but the words choked in his throat. He could not bring himself to acknowledge, in presence of such an assembly, the son whom he had renounced and disinherited. He ordered, however, Oswald to keep an eye upon him, and directed that officer, with two of his serfs, to convey Ivanhoe to Ashby as soon as the crowd had dispersed. Oswald, however, was anticipated in this good office. The crowd dispersed, indeed, but the knight was nowhere to be seen.

It was in vain that Cedric's cupbearer looked around for his young master. He saw the bloody spot on which he had lately sunk down, but himself he saw no longer: it seemed as if the fairies had conveyed him from the spot. Perhaps Oswald (for the Saxons were very superstitious) might have adopted some

[1] Exceptions being taken.

[2] Little point of nicety; exactitude in matters of ceremony.

such hypothesis to account for Ivanhoe's disappearance, had he not suddenly cast his eye upon a person attired like a squire, in whom he recognized the features of his fellow-servant Gurth. Anxious concerning his master's fate, and in despair at his sudden disappearance, the translated[1] swineherd was searching for him everywhere, and had neglected in doing so the concealment on which his own safety depended. Oswald deemed it his duty to secure Gurth, as a fugitive of whose fate his master was to judge.

Renewing his inquiries concerning the fate of Ivanhoe, the only information which the cupbearer could collect from the bystanders was, that the knight had been raised with care by certain well-attired grooms, and placed in a litter belonging to a lady among the spectators, which had immediately transported him out of the press. Oswald, on receiving this intelligence, resolved to return to his master for further instructions, carrying along with him Gurth, whom he considered in some sort as a deserter from the service of Cedric.

The Saxon had been under very intense and agonizing apprehensions concerning his son; for Nature had asserted her rights, in spite of the patriotic stoicism[2] which labored to disown her. But no sooner was he informed that Ivanhoe was in careful and probably in friendly hands, than the paternal anxiety which had been excited by the dubiety[3] of his fate gave way anew to the feeling of injured pride and resentment at what he termed Wilfred's filial disobedience. "Let him wander his way," said he. "Let those leech[4] his wounds for whose sake he encountered them. He is fitter to do the juggling[5] tricks of the Norman chivalry than to maintain the fame and honor of his English an-

[1] Changed in form.

[2] The doctrine of the Stoics, a Greek sect who, disciples of the philosopher Zeno, held that man should be unmoved by joy or sorrow, etc., and submit uncomplainingly to necessity.

[3] Uncertainty.

[4] To treat as a leech or physician; doctor.

[5] Alluding contemptuously to tournaments, etc.

cestry with the glaive[1] and brown-bill,[2] the good old weapons of his country."

"If to maintain the honor of ancestry," said Rowena, who was present, "it is sufficient to be wise in council, and brave in execution, to be boldest among the bold, and gentlest among the gentle, I know no voice, save his father's"—

"Be silent, Lady Rowena! On this subject only I hear you not. Prepare yourself for the prince's festival: we have been summoned thither with unwonted circumstance of honor and of courtesy, such as the haughty Normans have rarely used to our race since the fatal day of Hastings. Thither will I go, were it only to show these proud Normans how little the fate of a son who could defeat their bravest can affect a Saxon."

"Thither," said Rowena, "do I NOT go; and I pray you to beware, lest what you mean for courage and obstinacy shall be accounted hardness of heart."

"Remain at home, then, ungrateful lady," answered Cedric. "I seek the noble Athelstane, and with him attend the banquet of John of Anjou."

He went, accordingly, to the banquet, of which we have already mentioned the principal events. Immediately upon retiring from the castle, the Saxon thanes, with their attendants, took horse; and it was during the bustle which attended their doing so that Cedric for the first time cast his eyes upon the deserter Gurth. The noble Saxon had returned from the banquet, as we have seen, in no very placid humor, and wanted but a pretext for wreaking his anger upon some one. "The gyves!"[3] he said, "the gyves! Oswald — Hundibert! Dogs and villains! why leave ye the knave unfettered?"

Without daring to remonstrate, the companions of Gurth bound

[1] A cutting weapon consisting of a broad blade with a sharp point, mounted on a pole. The weapon is thought to have originated from the custom of the early Celts of fixing a sword to the end of a pole as an instrument of defense against cavalry.

[2] A form of bill or halberd (see Note 4, p. 51).

[3] Fetters.

him with a halter, as the readiest cord which occurred. He submitted to the operation without remonstrance, except that, darting a reproachful look at his master, he said, "This comes of loving your flesh and blood better than mine own."

"To horse, and forward!" said Cedric.

"It is indeed full time," said the noble Athelstane; "for if we ride not the faster, the worthy Abbot Waltheoff's preparations for a rere-supper[1] will be altogether spoiled."

The travelers, however, used such speed as to reach the Convent of St. Withold's before the apprehended evil took place. The abbot, himself of ancient Saxon descent, received the noble Saxons with profuse and exuberant hospitality, nor did they take leave of their reverend host the next morning until they had shared with him a sumptuous refection.

As the cavalcade left the court of the monastery, an incident happened somewhat alarming to the Saxons, who, of all people of Europe, were most addicted to a superstitious observance of omens, and to whose opinions can be traced most of those notions upon such subjects still to be found among our popular antiquities.

In the present instance, the apprehension of impending evil was inspired by no less respectable a prophet than a large, lean, black dog, which, sitting upright, howled most piteously as the foremost riders left the gate, and presently afterwards, barking wildly and jumping to and fro, seemed bent upon attaching itself to the party.

"I like not that music, father Cedric," said Athelstane, for by this title of respect he was accustomed to address him.

"Nor I either, uncle," said Wamba; "I greatly fear we shall have to pay the piper."[2]

"In my mind," said Athelstane, "we had better turn back,

[1] A night-meal, sometimes signifying a collation given at a late hour, after the regular supper had made its appearance.

[2] To pay the piper is to suffer the expense. The piper was a player on a pipe, or bagpipe.

and abide with the abbot until the afternoon It is unlucky to travel where your path is crossed by a monk, a hare, or a howling dog, until you have eaten your next meal."

"Away!" said Cedric impatiently. "The day is already too short for our journey. For the dog, I know it to be the cur of the runaway slave Gurth, a useless fugitive, like its master."

So saying, and rising at the same time in his stirrups, impatient at the interruption of his journey, he launched his javelin at poor Fangs; for Fangs it was, who, having traced his master thus far upon his stolen expedition, had here lost him, and was now, in his uncouth way, rejoicing at his reappearance. The javelin inflicted a wound upon the animal's shoulder, and narrowly missed pinning him to the earth; and Fangs fled, howling, from the presence of the enraged thane. Gurth's heart swelled within him, for he felt this meditated slaughter of his faithful adherent in a degree much deeper than the harsh treatment he had himself received. Having in vain attempted to raise his hand to his eyes, he said to Wamba, who, seeing his master's ill humor, had prudently retreated to the rear, "I pray thee, do me the kindness to wipe my eyes with the skirt of thy mantle: the dust offends me, and these bonds will not let me help myself one way or another."

Wamba did him the service he required, and they rode side by side for some time, during which Gurth maintained a moody silence. At length he could repress his feelings no longer.

"Friend Wamba," said he, "of all those who are fools enough to serve Cedric, thou alone hast dexterity enough to make thy folly acceptable to him. Go to him, therefore, and tell him that neither for love nor fear will Gurth serve him longer. He may strike the head from me, he may scourge me, he may load me with irons,[1] but henceforth he shall never compel me either to love or to obey him. Go to him, then, and tell him that Gurth the son of Beowulph renounces his service."

"Assuredly," said Wamba, "fool as I am, I shall not do your

[1] Fetters.

fool's errand. Cedric hath another javelin stuck into his girdle, and thou knowest he does not always miss his mark."

"I care not," replied Gurth, "how soon he makes a mark of me. Yesterday he left Wilfred, my young master, in his blood. To-day he has striven to kill before my face the only other living creature that ever showed me kindness. By St. Edmund, St. Dunstan, St. Withold, St. Edward the Confessor,[1] and every other Saxon saint in the calendar, I will never forgive him!"

"To my thinking, now," said the Jester, who was frequently wont to act as peacemaker in the family, "our master did not propose to hurt Fangs, but only to affright him: for, if you observed, he rose in his stirrups, as thereby meaning to overcast[2] the mark; and so he would have done, but Fangs, happening to bound up at the very moment, received a scratch, which I will be bound to heal with a penny's breadth of tar."

"If I thought so," said Gurth — "if I could but think so — but no — I saw the javelin was well aimed; I heard it whiz through the air with all the wrathful malevolence of him who cast it; and it quivered after it had pitched in the ground, as if with regret for having missed its mark. By St. Anthony, I renounce him!"

And the indignant swineherd resumed his sullen silence, which no efforts of the Jester could again induce him to break.

Meanwhile Cedric and Athelstane, the leaders of the troop, conversed together on the state of the land, on the dissensions of the royal family, on the feuds and quarrels among the Norman nobles, and on the chance that the oppressed Saxons might free themselves, or elevate themselves into national consequence and independence during civil convulsions likely to ensue. On this Cedric was all animation. The restoration of his race was the idol of his heart, to which he had willingly sacrificed domestic happiness and the interests of his son. But to achieve this in favor of the native English, it was necessary that they should be united among themselves, and act under an acknowledged head.

[1] King of England, 1042–66, esteemed for his piety. [2] Throw over.

The necessity of choosing the chief from the Saxon blood royal had been made a solemn condition by those whom Cedric had intrusted with his secret plans and hopes. Athelstane had this quality at least, though he had few talents to recommend him as a leader. But as head of the Saxon confederacy many of that nation were disposed to prefer to his the title of the Lady Rowena, who drew her descent from Alfred.

It would have been no difficult thing for Cedric, had he so disposed, to have placed himself at the head of a third party as formidable at least as any of the others. To counterbalance their royal descent, he had courage, activity, energy, and, above all, that devoted attachment to the cause which had procured him the epithet of THE SAXON; and his birth was inferior to none, excepting only that of Athelstane and his ward. These qualities were unalloyed by the slightest selfishness; and, instead of dividing his weakened nation by forming a faction of his own, it was a leading part of Cedric's plan to extinguish that which already existed by promoting a marriage betwixt Rowena and Athelstane. An obstacle occurred to this, his favorite project, in the mutual attachment of his ward and his son, and hence the original cause of the banishment of Wilfred from the house of his father.

This stern measure Cedric had adopted in hopes that during Wilfred's absence Rowena might relinquish her preference; but in this he was disappointed,—a disappointment which might be attributed in part to the mode in which his ward had been educated. Cedric, to whom the name of Alfred was as that of a deity, had treated the sole remaining scion[1] of that great monarch with a degree of observance such as perhaps was in those days scarce paid to an acknowledged princess. Rowena's will had been in almost all cases a law to his household; and Cedric himself, as if determined that her sovereignty should be fully acknowledged within that little circle at least, seemed to take a pride in acting as the first of her subjects. Thus trained

[1] Heir.

in the exercise not only of free will, but despotic authority, Rowena was disposed both to resist and to resent any attempt to control her affections, or dispose of her hand contrary to her inclinations. The opinions which she felt strongly, she avowed boldly; and Cedric, who could not free himself from his habitual deference to her opinions, felt totally at a loss how to enforce his authority of guardian.

It was in vain that he attempted to dazzle her with the prospect of a visionary throne. Rowena, who possessed strong sense, neither considered his plan as practicable nor as desirable, so far as she was concerned, could it have been achieved. Without attempting to conceal her avowed preference of Wilfred of Ivanhoe, she declared that, were that favored knight out of the question, she would rather take refuge in a convent than share a throne with Athelstane.

Nevertheless Cedric persisted in using every means in his power to bring about the proposed union of Athelstane and Rowena, together with expediting those other measures which seemed necessary to forward the restoration of Saxon independence.

On this last subject he was now laboring with Athelstane. The warm and impassioned exhortations of Cedric had little effect upon his impassive temper; and leaving this task, which might be compared to spurring a tired jade,[1] or to hammering upon cold iron, Cedric fell back to his ward Rowena. As his presence interrupted the discourse between the lady and her favorite attendant upon the gallantry and fate of Wilfred, Elgitha failed not to revenge both her mistress and herself by recurring to the overthrow of Athelstane in the lists, — the most disagreeable subject which could greet the ears of Cedric. To this sturdy Saxon, therefore, the day's journey was fraught with all manner of displeasure and discomfort.

At noon, upon the motion of Athelstane, the travelers paused in a woodland shade by a fountain, to repose their horses, and

[1] A worthless horse.

partake of some provisions with which the hospitable abbot had loaded a sumpter-mule. Their repast was a pretty long one, and these several interruptions rendered it impossible for them to hope to reach Rotherwood without traveling all night,— a conviction which induced them to proceed on their way at a more hasty pace than they had hitherto used.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE travelers had now reached the verge of the wooded country, and were about to plunge into its recesses, held dangerous at that time from the number of outlaws whom oppression and poverty had driven to despair, and who occupied the forests in such large bands as could easily bid defiance to the feeble police of the period. From these rovers, however, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, Cedric and Athelstane accounted themselves secure, as they had in attendance ten servants, besides Wamba and Gurth, whose aid could not be counted upon, the one being a jester, and the other a captive. It may be added, that, in traveling thus late through the forest, Cedric and Athelstane relied on their descent and character, as well as their courage. The outlaws, whom the severity of the forest laws had reduced to this roving and desperate mode of life, were chiefly peasants and yeomen of Saxon descent, and were generally supposed to respect the persons and property of their countrymen.

As the travelers journeyed on their way, they were alarmed by repeated cries for assistance; and, when they rode up to the place from whence they came, they were surprised to find a horse-litter[1] placed upon the ground, beside which sat a young woman richly dressed in the Jewish fashion, while an old man, whose yellow cap proclaimed him to belong to the same nation, walked

[1] A conveyance on poles, carried by horses and borne between them.

up and down with gestures of the deepest despair, and wrung his hands, as if affected by some strange disaster.

To the inquiries of Athelstane and Cedric, the old Jew could for some time only answer by invoking the protection of all the patriarchs of the Old Testament successively against the sons of Ishmael, who were coming to smite them, hip and thigh, with the edge of the sword. When he began to come to himself out of this agony of terror, Isaac of York (for it was our old friend) was at length able to explain that he had hired a body-guard of six men at Ashby, together with mules for carrying the litter of a sick friend. This party had undertaken to escort him as far as Doncaster. They had come thus far in safety, but, having received information from a woodcutter that there was a strong band of outlaws lying in wait in the woods before them, Isaac's mercenaries had not only taken flight, but had carried off with them the horses which bore the litter, and left the Jew and his daughter without the means either of defense or of retreat, to be plundered, and probably murdered, by the banditti, whom they expected every moment would bring down upon them. "Would it but please your valors," added Isaac in a tone of deep humiliation, "to permit the poor Jews to travel under your safeguard, I swear by the tables of our law,[1] that never has favor been conferred upon a child of Israel since the days of our captivity which shall be more gratefully acknowledged."

"Dog of a Jew!" said Athelstane, whose memory was of that petty kind which stores up trifles of all kinds, but particularly trifling offenses, "dost not remember how thou didst beard us in the gallery at the tilt-yard?[2] Fight or flee, or compound[3] with the outlaws as thou dost list;[4] ask neither aid nor company from us; and if they rob only such as thee, who rob all the world, I, for mine own share, shall hold them right honest folk."

Cedric did not assent to the severe proposal of his companion. "We shall do better," said he, "to leave them two of our attend-

[1] The law of Moses.
[2] Place for holding a tournament.
[3] Bargain.
[4] Please.

ants and two horses to convey them back to the next village. It will diminish our strength but little; and with your good sword, noble Athelstane, and the aid of those who remain, it will be light work for us to face twenty of those runagates."

Rowena, somewhat alarmed by the mention of outlaws in force, and so near them, strongly seconded the proposal of her guardian; but Rebecca, suddenly quitting her dejected posture, and making her way through the attendants to the palfrey of the Saxon lady, knelt down, and, after the Oriental fashion in addressing superiors, kissed the hem of Rowena's garment. Then, rising and throwing back her veil, she implored her in the great name of the God whom they both worshiped, and by that revelation of the law upon Mount Sinai[1] in which they both believed, that she would have compassion upon them, and suffer them to go forward under their safeguard. "It is not for myself that I pray this favor," said Rebecca, "nor is it even for that poor old man. I know that to wrong and to spoil our nation is a light fault, if not a merit, with the Christians; and what is it to us whether it be done in the city, in the desert, or in the field? But it is in the name of one dear to many, and dear even to you, that I beseech you to let this sick person be transported with care and tenderness under your protection; for, if evil chance him, the last moment of your life would be imbittered with regret for denying that which I ask of you."

The noble and solemn air with which Rebecca made this appeal gave it double weight with the fair Saxon.

"The man is old and feeble," she said to her guardian; "the maiden young and beautiful; their friend sick, and in peril of his life. Jews though they be, we cannot as Christians leave them in this extremity. Let them unload two of the sumpter-mules,

[1] A mountain, celebrated in Scripture, in Arabia Petræa, identified with the Jabel Moosa ("Mount of Moses"), and one of a group of mountains of which Mount Horeb forms a portion of the north end. In the Old Testament Mounts Sinai and Horeb are used interchangeably for the Mountain of the Law.

and put the baggage behind two of the serfs. The mules may transport the litter, and we have led horses for the old man and his daughter."

Cedric readily assented to what she proposed, and Athelstane only added the condition that they should travel in the rear of the whole party, "where Wamba," he said, "might attend them with his shield of boar's brawn."

"I have left my shield in the tilt-yard," answered the Jester, "as has been the fate of many a better knight than myself."

Athelstane colored deeply, for such had been his own fate on the last day of the tournament; while Rowena, who was pleased in the same proportion, as if to make amends for the brutal jest of her unfeeling suitor, requested Rebecca to ride by her side.

"It were not fit I should do so," answered Rebecca with proud humility, "where my society might be held a disgrace to my protectress."

By this time the change of baggage was hastily achieved; for the single word "outlaws" rendered every one sufficiently alert, and the approach of twilight made the sound yet more impressive. Amid the bustle, Gurth was taken from horseback, in the course of which removal he prevailed upon the Jester to slack the cord with which his arms were bound. It was so negligently refastened, perhaps intentionally, on the part of Wamba, that Gurth found no difficulty in freeing his arms altogether from bondage; and then, gliding into the thicket, he made his escape from the party.

The bustle had been considerable, and it was some time before Gurth was missed: for, as he was to be placed for the rest of the journey behind a servant, every one supposed that some other of his companions had him under his custody; and, when it began to be whispered among them that Gurth had actually disappeared, they were under such immediate expectation of an attack from the outlaws, that it was not held convenient to pay much attention to the circumstance.

The path which the party traveled was now so narrow as not

to admit with convenience above two riders abreast, and began to descend into a dingle,[1] traversed by a brook whose banks were broken, swampy, and overgrown with dwarf willows. Cedric and Athelstane, who were at the head of their retinue, saw the risk of being attacked at this pass; but, neither of them having had much practice in war, no better mode of preventing the danger occurred to them than that they should hasten through the defile as fast as possible. Advancing, therefore, without much order, they had just crossed the brook with a part of their followers, when they were assailed in front, flank, and rear at once, with an impetuosity to which, in their confused and ill-prepared condition, it was impossible to offer effectual resistance. The shout of "A white dragon, a white dragon!" "St. George[2] for merry England!"—war-cries adopted by the assailants as belonging to their assumed character of Saxon outlaws—was heard on every side, and on every side enemies appeared with a rapidity of advance and attack which seemed to multiply their numbers.

Both the Saxon chiefs were made prisoners at the same moment, and each under circumstances expressive of his character. Cedric, the instant an enemy appeared, launched at him his remaining javelin, which, taking better effect than that which he had hurled at Fangs, nailed the man against an oak-tree that happened to be close behind him. Thus far successful, Cedric spurred his horse against a second, drawing his sword at the same time, and striking with such inconsiderate fury that his weapon encountered a thick branch which hung over him, and he was disarmed by the violence of his own blow. He was instantly made prisoner, and pulled from his horse by two or three

[1] Dale; vale.

[2] The national saint of England, born, it is said, at Cappadocia; met death by martyrdom, April 23, 303, at Nicomedia. Among many legends concerning him, that of his slaying the dragon is best known. His day is celebrated April 23. The popularity of his name in England begins from the time of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who, it is stated, in the First Crusade called upon his aid, but he was not patron saint of the kingdom until the time of Edward III.

of the banditti, who crowded around him. Athelstane shared his captivity; his bridle having been seized, and he himself forcibly dismounted, long before he could draw his weapon or assume any posture of effectual defense.

The attendants, embarrassed with baggage, surprised and terrified at the fate of their masters, fell an easy prey to the assailants; while the Lady Rowena, in the center of the cavalcade, and the Jew and his daughter in the rear, experienced the same misfortune.

Of all the train, none escaped except Wamba, who showed upon the occasion much more courage than those who pretended to greater sense. He possessed himself of a sword belonging to one of the domestics, who was just drawing it with a tardy and irresolute hand, laid it about him like a lion, drove back several who approached him, and made a brave though ineffectual attempt to succor his master. Finding himself overpowered, the Jester at length threw himself from his horse, plunged into the thicket, and, favored by the general confusion, escaped from the scene of action.

Yet the valiant Jester, as soon as he found himself safe, hesitated more than once whether he should not turn back and share the captivity of a master to whom he was sincerely attached.

"I have heard men talk of the blessings of freedom," he said to himself, "but I wish any wise man would teach me what use to make of it now that I have it."

As he pronounced these words aloud, a voice very near him called out in a low and cautious tone, "Wamba!" and at the same time a dog, which he recognized to be Fangs, jumped up and fawned upon him.

"Gurth!" answered Wamba with the same caution, and the swineherd immediately stood before him.

"What is the matter?" said he eagerly. "What mean these cries and that clashing of swords?"

"Only a trick of the times," said Wamba. "They are all prisoners."

"Who are prisoners?" exclaimed Gurth impatiently.

"My lord and my lady, and Athelstane and Hundibert and Oswald."

"In the name of God," said Gurth, "how came they prisoners, and to whom?"

"Our master was too ready to fight," said the Jester; "and Athelstane was not ready enough, and no other person was ready at all; and they are prisoners to green cassocks[1] and black visors;[2] and they lie all tumbled about on the green, like the crab-apples that you shake down to your swine; and I would laugh at it," said the honest Jester, "if I could for weeping;" and he shed tears of unfeigned sorrow.

Gurth's countenance kindled. "Wamba," he said, "thou hast a weapon, and thy heart was ever stronger than thy brain. We are only two, but a sudden attack from men of resolution will do much. Follow me!"

"Whither, and for what purpose?" said the Jester.

"To rescue Cedric."

"But you have renounced his service but now," said Wamba.

"That," said Gurth, "was but while he was fortunate. Follow me!"

As the Jester was about to obey, a third person suddenly made his appearance, and commanded them both to halt. From his dress and arms, Wamba would have conjectured him to be one of those outlaws who had just assailed his master; but, besides that he wore no mask, the glittering baldric across his shoulder, with the rich bugle-horn which it supported, as well as the calm and commanding expression of his voice and manner, made him, notwithstanding the twilight, recognize Locksley the yeoman, who had been victorious, under such disadvantageous circumstances, in the contest for the prize of archery.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said he, "or who is it that rifle and ransom and make prisoners in these forests?"

"You may look at their cassocks close by," said Wamba, "and

[1] A loose outer cloak. [2] That is, to robbers.

see whether they be thy children's coats or no, for they are as like thine own as one green pea-cod is to another."

"I will learn that presently," answered Locksley; "and I charge ye, on peril of your lives, not to stir from the place where ye stand until I have returned. Obey me, and it shall be the better for you and your masters. Yet stay, I must render myself as like these men as possible."

So saying, he unbuckled his baldric with the bugle, took a feather from his cap, and gave them to Wamba, then drew a vizard[1] from his pouch, and, repeating his charges to them to stand fast, went to execute his purposes of reconnoitering.

"Shall we stand fast, Gurth?" said Wamba, "or shall we e'en give him leg bail?[2] In my foolish mind, he had all the equipage[3] of a thief too much in readiness to be himself a true man."

"Let him be the Devil," said Gurth, "an he will. We can be no worse of waiting his return. If he belong to that party, he must already have given them the alarm, and it will avail nothing either to fight or fly. Besides, I have late experience that arrant thieves are not the worst men in the world to have to deal with."

The yeoman returned in the course of a few minutes.

"Friend Gurth," he said, "I have mingled among yon men, and have learned to whom they belong, and whither they are bound. There is, I think, no chance that they will proceed to any actual violence against their prisoners. For three men to attempt them at this moment were little else than madness, for they are good men of war, and have as such placed sentinels to give the alarm when any one approaches; but I trust soon to gather such a force as may act in defiance of all their precautions. You are both servants, and, as I think, faithful servants, of Cedric the Saxon, the friend of the rights of Englishmen. He shall not want English hands to help him in this extremity. Come, then, with me, until I gather more aid."

So saying, he walked through the wood at a great pace, fol-

[1] Mask. [2] Let him run away. [3] Equipments; belongings.

lowed by the Jester and the swineherd. It was not consistent with Wamba's humor to travel long in silence.

"I think," said he, looking at the baldric and bugle which he still carried, "that I saw the arrow shot which won this gay prize, and that not so long since as Christmas."

"And I," said Gurth, "could take it on my halidom that I have heard the voice of the good yeoman who won it, by night as well as by day, and that the moon is not three days older since I did so."

"Mine honest friends," replied the yeoman, "who or what I am is little to the present purpose. Should I free your master, you will have reason to think me the best friend you have ever had in your lives; and whether I am known by one name or another, or whether I can draw a bow as well or better than a cow-keeper, or whether it is my pleasure to walk in sunshine or by moonlight, are matters which, as they do not concern you, so neither need ye busy yourselves respecting them."

"Our heads are in the lion's mouth," said Wamba in a whisper to Gurth, "get them out how we can."

"Hush! Be silent!" said Gurth. "Offend him not by thy folly, and I trust sincerely that all will go well."

CHAPTER XX.

IT was after three hours' good walking that the servants of Cedric, with their mysterious guide, arrived at a small opening in the forest, in the center of which grew an oak-tree of enormous magnitude, throwing its twisted branches in every direction. Beneath this tree four or five yeomen lay stretched on the ground, while another, as sentinel, walked to and fro in the moonlight shade.

Upon hearing the sound of feet approaching, the watch instantly gave the alarm, and the sleepers as suddenly started up

and bent their bows. Six arrows placed on the string were pointed towards the quarter from which the travelers approached, when their guide, being recognized, was welcomed with every token of respect and attachment, and all signs and fears of a rough reception at once subsided.

"Where is the miller?" was his first question.

"On the road towards Rotherham."

"With how many?" demanded the leader, for such he seemed to be.

"With six men and good hope of booty, if it please St. Nicholas."

"Devoutly spoken," said Locksley; "and where is Allan-a-Dale?"

"Walked up towards the Watling Street,[1] to watch for the Prior of Jorvaulx."

"That is well thought on also," replied the captain; "and where is the friar?"

"In his cell."

"Thither will I go," said Locksley. "Disperse and seek your companions. Collect what force you can, for there's game afoot that must be hunted hard, and will turn to bay. Meet me here by daybreak. And stay," he added, "I have forgotten what is most necessary of the whole. Two of you take the road quickly towards Torquilstone, the castle of Front-de-Bœuf. A set of gallants, who have been masquerading in such guise as our own, are carrying a band of prisoners thither. Watch them closely, for, even if they reach the castle before we collect our force, our honor is concerned to punish them, and we will find means to do so. Keep a close watch on them, therefore; and dispatch one of your comrades, the lightest of foot, to bring the news of the yeomen thereabout."

They promised implicit obedience, and departed with alacrity on their different errands. In the mean while, their leader and

[1] A celebrated Roman road or highway of Britain, running from Dover to London, and on to Chester and North Wales.

his two companions, who now looked upon him with great respect, as well as some fear, pursued their way to the chapel of Copmanhurst.

When they had reached the little moonlight glade, having in front the reverend though ruinous chapel and the rude hermitage, so well suited to ascetic devotion, Wamba whispered to Gurth, "If this be the habitation of a thief, it makes good the old proverb, 'The nearer the church, the farther from God.' And, by my coxcomb,"[1] he added, "I think it be even so. Hearken but to the black sanctus[2] which they are singing in the hermitage!"

In fact, the anchorite and his guest were performing, at the full extent of their very powerful lungs, a drinking-song.

"Now, that is not ill sung," said Wamba, who had thrown in a few of his own flourishes to help out the chorus. "But who, in the saint's name, ever expected to have heard such a jolly chant come from out a hermit's cell at midnight?"

"Marry, that should I," said Gurth, "for the jolly Clerk of Copmanhurst is a known man, and kills half the deer that are stolen in this walk.[3] Men say that the keeper has complained to his official, and that he will be stripped of his cowl and cope altogether if he keep not better order."

While they were thus speaking, Locksley's loud and repeated knocks had at length disturbed the anchorite and his guest. "By my beads," said the hermit, stopping short in a grand flourish, "here come more benighted guests. I would not for my cowl that they found us in this goodly exercise. All men have their enemies, good Sir Sluggard; and there be those malignant enough to construe the hospitable refreshment which I have been offering to you, a weary traveler, for the matter of three short hours, into sheer drunkenness, alien to my profession and my disposition."

[1] Jester's cap; called coxcomb from the bit of red cloth which, notched like the comb of a cock, was formerly worn in their caps by licensed jesters.

[2] The black sanctus was a name used in irony for a drinking-song; a *sanctus* (meaning "holy") was an anthem.

[3] Habitual haunt, used in the sense of a run, as a sheep-run.

"Base calumniators!" replied the knight; "I would I had the chastising of them! Nevertheless, Holy Clerk, it is true that all have their enemies, and there be those in this very land whom I would rather speak to through the bars of my helmet than barefaced."

"Get thine iron pot[1] on thy head, then, friend Sluggard, as quickly as thy nature will permit," said the hermit, "while I remove these pewter flagons; and to drown the clatter strike into the tune which thou hearest me sing. It is no matter for the words: I scarce know them myself."

So saying, he struck up a thundering *De profundis clamavi*,[2] under cover of which he removed the apparatus[3] of their banquet; while the knight, laughing heartily, and arming himself all the while, assisted his host with his voice from time to time, as his mirth permitted.

"What matins[4] are you after at this hour?" said a voice from without.

"Heaven forgive you, Sir Traveler!" said the hermit, whose own noise perhaps prevented from recognizing accents which were tolerably familiar to him. "Wend[5] on your way, in the name of God and St. Dunstan, and disturb not the devotions of me and my holy brother."

"Mad priest," answered the voice from without, "open to Locksley!"

"All's safe, all's right," said the hermit to his companion.

"But who is he?" said the Black Knight: "it imports me much to know."

"Who is he?" answered the hermit. "I tell thee he is a friend."

"But what friend?" answered the knight; "for he may be friend to thee, and none of mine."

"What friend?" replied the hermit; "that, now, is one of the questions that is more easily asked than answered. What friend?

[1] Helmet. [2] "Out of the depths have I cried" (see Psalm cxxx.).
[3] The dishes, etc. [4] Morning prayers. [5] Proceed.

Why, he is, now that I bethink me a little, the very same honest keeper I told thee of awhile since."

"Ay, as honest a keeper as thou art a pious hermit," replied the knight. "I doubt it not. But undo the door to him before he beat it from its hinges."

The dogs, in the mean time, which had made a dreadful baying at the commencement of the disturbance, seemed now to recognize the voice of him who stood without; for, totally changing their manner, they scratched and whined at the door, as if interceding for his admission. The hermit speedily unbolted his portal, and admitted Locksley with his two companions.

"Why, hermit," was the yeoman's first question as soon as he beheld the knight, "what boon companion hast thou here?"

"A brother of our order," replied the friar, shaking his head; "we have been at our orisons all night."

"He is a monk of the church militant, I think," answered Locksley; "and there be more of them abroad. I tell thee, friar, thou must lay down the rosary and take up the quarter-staff. We shall need every one of our merry men, whether clerk or layman. But," he added, taking him a step aside, "art thou mad, to give admittance to a knight thou dost not know? Hast thou forgot our articles?"[1]

"Not know him!" replied the friar boldly. "I know him as well as the beggar knows his dish."

"And what is his name, then?" demanded Locksley.

"His name," said the hermit — "his name is Sir Anthony of Scrablestone!"

"Thou hast been prating, I fear," said the woodsman.

"Good yeoman," said the knight, coming forward, "be not wroth with my merry host. He did but afford me the hospitality which I would have compelled from him if he had refused it."

"Thou compel!" said the friar. "Wait but till I have changed this gray gown for a green cassock, and, if I make not a quarter-

[1] Bonds of agreement.

staff ring twelve upon thy pate, I am neither true clerk nor good woodsman."

While he spoke thus, he stripped off his gown, and appeared in a close black buckram doublet and drawers, over which he speedily did on a cassock of green, and hose of the same color. "I pray thee truss[1] my points,"[2] said he to Wamba, "and thou shalt have a cup of sack[3] for thy labor."

"Gramercy for thy sack," said Wamba; "but thinkst thou it is lawful for me to aid you to transmew[4] thyself from a holy hermit into a sinful forester?"

"Never fear," said the hermit; "I will but confess the sins of my green cloak to my gray friar's frock, and all shall be well again."

"Amen!" answered the Jester. "A broadcloth penitent should have a sackcloth confessor, and your frock may absolve my motley doublet into the bargain."

So saying, he accommodated the friar with his assistance in tying the endless number of points, as the laces which attached the hose to the doublet were then termed.

While they were thus employed, Locksley led the knight a little apart, and addressed him thus: "Deny it not, Sir Knight, you are he who decided the victory to the advantage of the English against the strangers on the second day of the tournament at Ashby."

"And what follows if you guess truly, good yeoman?" replied the knight.

"I should in that case hold you," replied the yeoman, "a friend to the weaker party."

"Such is the duty of a true knight, at least," replied the Black Champion; "and I would not willingly that there were reason to think otherwise of me."

"But for my purpose," said the yeoman, "thou shouldst be as well a good Englishman as a good knight; for that which I have

[1] Tighten; fasten.
[2] Laces used for the dress.
[3] Wine.
[4] Change.

to speak of concerns, indeed, the duty of every honest man, but is more especially that of a true-born native of England."

"You can speak to no one," replied the knight, "to whom England, and the life of every Englishman, can be dearer than to me."

"I would willingly believe so," said the woodsman, "for never had this country such need to be supported by those who love her. Hear me, and I will tell thee of an enterprise in which, if thou be'st really that which thou seemest, thou mayest take an honorable part. A band of villains, in the disguise of better men than themselves, have made themselves master of the person of a noble Englishman, called Cedric the Saxon, together with his ward, and his friend Athelstane of Coningsburgh, and have transported them to a castle in this forest, called Torquilstone. I ask of thee, as a good knight and a good Englishman, wilt thou aid in their rescue?"

"I am bound by my vow to do so," replied the knight; "but I would willingly know who you are, who request my assistance in their behalf."

"I am," said the forester, "a nameless man; but I am the friend of my country, and of my country's friends. With this account of me you must for the present remain satisfied, the more especially since you yourself desire to continue unknown. Believe, however, that my word, when pledged, is as inviolate as if I wore golden spurs."

"I willingly believe it," said the knight; "I have been accustomed to study men's countenances, and I can read in thine honesty and resolution. I will therefore ask thee no further questions, but aid thee in setting at freedom these oppressed captives; which done, I trust we shall part better acquainted, and well satisfied with each other."

"So," said Wamba to Gurth — for, the friar being now fully equipped, the Jester, having approached to the other side of the hut, had heard the conclusion of the conversation — "so we have got a new ally?"

The friar was now completely accoutered as a yeoman, with sword and buckler, bow and quiver, and a strong partisan[1] over his shoulder. He left his cell at the head of the party, and, having carefully locked the door, deposited the key under the threshold.

"Come on," said Locksley, "and be silent! Come on, my masters! We must collect all our forces; and few enough we shall have, if we are to storm the castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

CHAPTER XXI.

WHILE these measures were taking in behalf of Cedric and his companions, the armed men by whom the latter had been seized hurried their captives along towards the place of security where they intended to imprison them; but darkness came on fast, and the paths of the wood seemed but imperfectly known to the marauders. They were compelled to make several long halts, and once or twice to return on their road to resume the direction which they wished to pursue. The summer morn had dawned upon them ere they could travel in full assurance that they held the right path; but confidence returned with light, and the cavalcade now moved rapidly forward. Meanwhile the following dialogue took place between the two leaders of the banditti:—

"It is time thou shouldst leave us, Sir Maurice," said the Templar to De Bracy, "in order to prepare the second part of thy mystery. Thou art next, thou knowest, to act the knight deliverer."

"I have thought better of it," said De Bracy. "I will not leave thee till the prize is fairly deposited in Front-de-Bœuf's castle. There will I appear before the Lady Rowena in mine own shape."

[1] A staff capped by a blade with side projections; a form of halberd, a long-handled cutting weapon.

"And what has made thee change thy plan, De Bracy?" replied the Knight Templar.

"That concerns thee nothing," answered his companion.

"I would hope, however, Sir Knight," said the Templar, "that this alteration of measures arises from no suspicion of my honorable meaning, such as Fitzurse endeavored to instill into thee."

"My thoughts are my own," answered De Bracy; "suffice it to say, I will not give thee the power of cheating me out of the prey for which I have run such risks."

"Hear the truth, then," said the Templar: "I care not for your blue-eyed beauty. I have a prize among the captives as lovely as thine own."

"By the mass, thou meanest the fair Jewess!" said De Bracy.

"And if I do," said Bois-Guilbert, "who shall gainsay me?"

"No one that I know," said De Bracy. "Yet I would have sworn thy thoughts had been more on the old usurer's moneybags than on the black eyes of the daughter."

"I can admire both," answered the Templar; "besides, the old Jew is but half-prize. I must share his spoils with Front-de-Bœuf. But, now thou knowest my drift, thou wilt resume thine own original plan, wilt thou not?"

"No," replied De Bracy, "I will remain beside my prize."

While this dialogue was proceeding, Cedric was endeavoring to wring out of those who guarded him an avowal of their character and purpose.

It was in vain that Cedric expostulated with his guards, who had too many good reasons for their silence to be induced to break it either by his wrath or his expostulations. They continued to hurry him along, traveling at a very rapid rate, until, at the end of an avenue of huge trees, arose Torquilstone, now the hoary and ancient castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. It was a fortress of no great size, consisting of a donjon,[1] or large and high square tower, surrounded by buildings of inferior height, which were encircled by an inner courtyard. Around the ex-

[1] In ancient castles the chief tower, also called the "keep."

terior wall was a deep moat, supplied with water from a neighboring rivulet. Front-de-Bœuf, whose character placed him often at feud with his enemies, had made considerable additions to the strength of his castle by building towers upon the outward wall, so as to flank it at every angle. The access, as usual in castles of the period, lay through an arched barbican,[1] or outwork, which was terminated and defended by a small turret at each corner.

Cedric no sooner saw the turrets of Front-de-Bœuf's castle raise their gray and moss-grown battlements, glimmering in the morning sun, above the woods by which they were surrounded, than he instantly augured more truly concerning the cause of his misfortune.

"I did injustice," he said, "to the thieves and outlaws of these woods, when I supposed such banditti to belong to their bands. I might as justly have confounded the foxes of these brakes[2] with the ravening wolves of France. Tell me, dogs, is it my life, or my wealth, that your master aims at? Is it too much that two Saxons, myself and the noble Athelstane, should hold land in the country which was once the patrimony of our race? Put us, then, to death, and complete your tyranny by taking our lives, as you began with our liberties. If the Saxon Cedric cannot rescue England, he is willing to die for her. Tell your tyrannical master I do only beseech him to dismiss the Lady Rowena in safety. She is a woman, and he need not dread her; and with us will die all who dare fight in her cause."

The attendants remained as mute to this address as to the former, and they now stood before the gate of the castle. De Bracy winded his horn three times, and the archers and cross-bow-men, who had manned the wall upon seeing their approach, hastened to lower the drawbridge and admit them. The prisoners were compelled by their guards to alight, and were conducted to

[1] An outwork or out-tower defending the entrance of a castle, commanding its approach over a drawbridge usually.

[2] Thick underbrush.

an apartment where a hasty repast was offered them, of which none but Athelstane felt any inclination to partake. Neither had the descendant of the Confessor much time to do justice to the good cheer placed before them, for their guards gave him and Cedric to understand that they were to be imprisoned in a chamber apart from Rowena. Resistance was vain; and they were compelled to follow to a large room, which, rising on clumsy Saxon pillars, resembled those refectories[1] and chapter-houses[2] which may be still seen in the most ancient parts of our most ancient monasteries.

The Lady Rowena was next separated from her train, and conducted, with courtesy indeed, but still without consulting her inclination, to a distant apartment. The same distinction was conferred on Rebecca, in spite of her father's entreaties, who offered even money, in this extremity of distress, that she might be permitted to abide with him. "Base unbeliever," answered one of his guards, "when thou hast seen thy lair, thou wilt not wish thy daughter to partake it." And without further discussion the old Jew was forcibly dragged off in a different direction from the other prisoners. The domestics, after being carefully searched and disarmed, were confined in another part of the castle; and Rowena was refused even the comfort she might have derived from the attendance of her handmaiden Elgitha.

The apartment in which the Saxon chiefs were confined, although at present used as a sort of guard-room, had formerly been the great hall of the castle. It was now abandoned to meaner purposes, because the present lord, among other additions to the convenience, security, and beauty of his baronial residence, had erected a new and noble hall, whose vaulted roof was supported by lighter and more elegant pillars, and fitted up with that higher degree of ornament which the Normans had already introduced into architecture.

[1] The dining apartments in a monastery.

[2] Buildings connected with cathedrals or religious houses in which the chapters or assemblies of monks or other clergy held council.

Cedric paced the apartment, filled with indignant reflections on the past and on the present, while the apathy of his companion served, instead of patience and philosophy, to defend him against everything save the inconvenience of the present moment; and so little did he feel even this last, that he was only from time to time roused to a reply by Cedric's animated and impassioned appeal to him.

"Yes," said Cedric, half speaking to himself and half addressing himself to Athelstane, "it was in this very hall that my ancestor feasted with Torquil Wolfganger, when he entertained the valiant and unfortunate Harold,[1] then advancing against the Norwegians, who had united themselves to the rebel Tosti.[2] It was in this hall that Harold returned the magnanimous answer to the ambassador of his rebel brother. Oft have I heard my father kindle as he told the tale. Who would have thought that you, noble Athelstane — that you, descended of Harold's blood, and that I, whose father was not the worst defender of the Saxon crown, should be prisoners to a vile Norman, in the very hall in which our ancestors held such high festival?"

While the Saxon was plunged in painful reflections, the door of their prison opened, and gave entrance to a sewer,[3] holding his white rod of office. This important person advanced into the chamber with a grave pace, followed by four attendants bearing in a table covered with dishes, the sight and smell of which seemed to be an instant compensation to Athelstane for all the inconvenience he had undergone. The persons who attended on the feast were masked and cloaked.

"What mummery is this?" said Cedric. "Think you that we

[1] The Saxon king defeated at Hastings by William the Conqueror, Oct. 14, 1066, and killed in the battle.

[2] The battle alluded to, fought and won by King Harold over his brother, the rebellious Tosti, and an auxiliary force of Danes or Norsemen, took place in 1066 at Stamford, Strangford, or Staneford, — a ford upon the river Derwent, seven miles from York, and situated in that large and opulent county.

[3] A steward.

are ignorant whose prisoners we are, when we are in the castle of your master? Tell him," he continued, willing to use this opportunity to open a negotiation for his freedom—"tell your master, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, that we know no reason he can have for withholding our liberty, excepting his unlawful desire to enrich himself at our expense. Tell him that we yield to his rapacity as in similar circumstances we should do to that of a literal robber. Let him name the ransom at which he rates our liberty, and it shall be paid, providing the exaction is suited to our means."

The sewer made no answer, but bowed his head.

"And tell Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said Athelstane, "that I send him my mortal defiance, and challenge him to combat with me, on foot or horseback, at any secure place, within eight days after our liberation; which, if he be a true knight, he will not, under these circumstances, venture to refuse or to delay."

"I shall deliver to the knight your defiance," answered the sewer; "meanwhile I leave you to your food."

The challenge of Athelstane was delivered with no good grace; for a large mouthful, which required the exercise of both jaws at once, added to a natural hesitation, considerably damped the effect of the bold defiance it contained. Still, however, his speech was hailed by Cedric as an incontestable token of reviving spirit in his companion, whose previous indifference had begun, notwithstanding his respect for Athelstane's descent, to wear out his patience. But he now cordially shook hands with him in token of his approbation, and was somewhat grieved when Athelstane observed that he would fight a dozen such men as Front-de-Bœuf, if by so doing he could hasten his departure from a dungeon where they put so much garlic into their pottage. Notwithstanding this intimation of a relapse into apathy, Cedric placed himself opposite to Athelstane, and soon showed, that, if the distresses of his country could banish the recollection of food while the table was uncovered, yet no sooner were the victuals put there than he proved that the appetite of his Saxon ancestors had descended to him along with their other qualities.

The captives had not long enjoyed their refreshment, however, ere their attention was disturbed, even from this most serious occupation, by the blast of a horn winded before the gate. It was repeated three times, with as much violence as if it had been blown before an enchanted castle by the destined knight at whose summons halls and towers, barbican and battlement, were to roll off like a morning vapor. The Saxons started from the table, and hastened to the window, but their curiosity was disappointed; for these outlets only looked upon the court of the castle, and the sound came from beyond its precincts. The summons, however, seemed of importance, for a considerable degree of bustle instantly took place in the castle.

CHAPTER XXII.

LEAVING the Saxon chiefs to return to their banquet, we have to look in upon the yet more severe imprisonment of Isaac of York. The poor Jew had been hastily thrust into a dungeon-vault of the castle, the floor of which was deep beneath the level of the ground, and very damp, being lower than even the moat itself. The only light was received through one or two loop-holes far above the reach of the captive's hand. These apertures admitted, even at midday, only a dim and uncertain light, which was changed for utter darkness long before the rest of the castle had lost the blessing of day. Chains and shackles, which had been the portion of former captives from whom active exertions to escape had been apprehended, hung, rusted and empty, on the walls of the prison; and in the rings of one of those sets of fetters there remained two moldering bones, which seemed to have been once those of the human leg, as if the prisoner had been left not only to perish there, but to be consumed to a skeleton.

At one end of this ghastly apartment was a large fire-grate,

over the top of which were stretched some transverse iron bars, half devoured with rust.

The whole appearance of the dungeon might have appalled a stouter heart than that of Isaac, who, nevertheless, was more composed under the imminent pressure of danger than he had seemed to be while affected by terrors of which the cause was as yet remote and contingent.

In this humor of passive resistance, and with his garment collected beneath him to keep his limbs from the wet pavement, Isaac sat in a corner of his dungeon, where his folded hands, his disheveled hair and beard, his furred cloak and high cap, seen by the wiry and broken light, would have afforded a study for Rembrandt,[1] had that celebrated painter existed at the period. The Jew remained without altering his position for nearly three hours, at the expiry of which steps were heard on the dungeon stair. The bolts screamed as they were withdrawn, the hinges creaked as the wicket opened, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, followed by the two Saracen slaves of the Templar, entered the prison.

Front-de-Bœuf, a tall and strong man, whose life had been spent in public war or in private feuds and broils, and who had hesitated at no means of extending his feudal power, had features corresponding to his character, and which strongly expressed the fiercer and more malignant passions of the mind. The scars with which his visage was seamed would, on features of a different cast, have excited the sympathy and veneration due to the marks of honorable valor; but, in the peculiar case of Front-de-Bœuf, they only added to the ferocity of his countenance and to the dread which his presence inspired. This formidable baron was clad in a leathern doublet, fitted close to his body, which was frayed and soiled with the stains of his armor. He had no weapon excepting a poniard at his belt, which served to counter-

[1] A Dutch painter of history and portraits, celebrated for his powerful rendering of contrasts in light and shadow, born June 15, 1606, near Leyden, and died in Amsterdam, October 8, 1669.

balance the weight of the bunch of rusty keys that hung at his right side.

The black slaves who attended Front-de-Bœuf were stripped of their gorgeous apparel, and attired in jerkins and trousers of coarse linen, their sleeves being tucked up above the elbow, like those of butchers when about to exercise their function in the slaughter-house. Each had in his hand a small pannier,[1] and, when they entered the dungeon, they stopped at the door until Front-de-Bœuf himself carefully locked and double-locked it. Having taken this precaution, he advanced slowly up the apartment towards the Jew, upon whom he kept his eye fixed as if he wished to paralyze him with his glance, as some animals are said to fascinate their prey. It seemed, indeed, as if the sullen and malignant eye of Front-de-Bœuf possessed some portion of that supposed power over his unfortunate prisoner. The Jew sate with his mouth agape, and his eyes fixed on the savage baron with such earnestness of terror that his frame seemed literally to shrink together and to diminish in size while encountering the fierce Norman's fixed and baleful gaze. The unhappy Isaac was deprived not only of the power of rising to make the obeisance which his terror dictated, but he could not even doff his cap or utter any word of supplication, so strongly was he agitated by the conviction that tortures and death were impending over him.

On the other hand, the stately form of the Norman appeared to dilate in magnitude, like that of the eagle, which ruffles up its plumage when about to pounce on its defenseless prey. He paused within three steps of the corner in which the unfortunate Jew had now, as it were, coiled himself up into the smallest possible space, and made a sign for one of the slaves to approach. The black satellite came forward, accordingly, and, producing from his basket a large pair of scales and several weights, he laid them at the feet of Front-de-Bœuf, and again retired to the respectful distance at which his companion had already taken his station.

[1] Basket of wicker-work.

The motions of these men were slow and solemn, as if there impended over their souls some preconception of horror and of cruelty. Front-de-Bœuf himself opened the scene by thus addressing his ill-fated captive:—

"Most accursed dog of an accursed race," he said, awaking with his deep and sullen voice the sullen echoes of his dungeon vault, "seest thou these scales?"

The unhappy Jew returned a feeble affirmative.

"In these very scales shalt thou weigh me out," said the relentless baron, "a thousand silver pounds, after the just measure and weight of the Tower of London."

"Holy Abraham!" returned the Jew, finding voice through the very extremity of his danger, "heard man ever such a demand? Who ever heard, even in a minstrel's tale, of such a sum as a thousand pounds of silver? What human sight was ever blessed with the vision of such a mass of treasure? Not within the walls of York, ransack my house and that of all my tribe, wilt thou find the tithe[1] of that huge sum of silver that thou speakest of."

"I am reasonable," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "and if silver be scant, I refuse not gold. At the rate of a mark of gold for each six pounds of silver, thou shalt free thy unbelieving carcass from such punishment as thy heart has never even conceived."

"Have mercy on me, noble knight!" exclaimed Isaac. "I am old and poor and helpless. It were unworthy to triumph over me. It is a poor deed to crush a worm."

"Old thou mayest be," replied the knight, "more shame to their folly who have suffered thee to grow gray in usury and knavery; feeble thou mayest be, for when had a Jew either heart or hand? but rich it is well known thou art."

"I swear to you, noble knight," said the Jew, "by all which I believe, and by all which we believe in common"—

"Perjure not thyself," said the Norman, interrupting him, "and let not thine obstinacy seal thy doom until thou hast seen

[1] A tenth; any small portion.

and well considered the fate that awaits thee. Think not I speak to thee only to excite thy terror, and practice on the base cowardice thou hast derived from thy tribe. I swear to thee by that which thou dost NOT believe, by the gospel which our Church teaches, and by the keys which are given her to bind and to loose, that my purpose is deep and peremptory.[1] This dungeon is no place for trifling. Prisoners ten thousand times more distinguished than thou have died within these walls, and their fate hath never been known; but for thee is reserved a long and lingering death, to which theirs were luxury."

He again made a signal for the slaves to approach, and spoke to them apart, in their own language; for he also had been in Palestine, where, perhaps, he had learned his lesson of cruelty. The Saracens produced from their baskets a quantity of charcoal, a pair of bellows, and a flask of oil. While the one struck a light with a flint and steel, the other disposed the charcoal in the large rusty grate which we have already mentioned, and exercised the bellows until the fuel came to a red glow.

"Seest thou, Isaac," said Front-de-Bœuf, "the range of iron bars above that glowing charcoal? On that warm couch thou shalt lie, stripped of thy clothes, as if thou wert to rest on a bed of down. One of these slaves shall maintain the fire beneath thee, while the other shall anoint thy wretched limbs with oil, lest the roast should burn. Now choose betwixt such a scorching bed and the payment of a thousand pounds of silver; for, by the head of my father, thou hast no other option."

"It is impossible," exclaimed the miserable Jew—"it is impossible that your purpose can be real! The good God of nature never made a heart capable of exercising such cruelty!"

"Trust not to that, Isaac," said Front-de-Bœuf: "it were a fatal error. Dost thou think that I, who have seen a town sacked in which thousands of my Christian countrymen perished by sword, by flood, and by fire, will blench[2] from my purpose for the outcries or screams of one single wretched Jew? Or

[1] Not debatable; that is, final.

[2] Shrink away from.

thinkest thou that these swarthy slaves, who have neither law, country, nor conscience, but their master's will; who use the poison, or the stake, or the poniard, or the cord, at his slightest wink — thinkest thou that *they* will have mercy, who do not even understand the language in which it is asked? Be wise, old man; discharge thyself of a portion of thy superfluous wealth; repay to the hands of a Christian a part of what thou hast acquired by the usury thou hast practiced on those of his religion. Thy cunning may soon swell out once more thy shriveled purse, but neither leech nor medicine can restore thy scorched hide and flesh wert thou once stretched on these bars. Tell down thy ransom, I say, and rejoice that at such rate thou canst redeem thee from a dungeon the secrets of which few have returned to tell. I waste no more words with thee. Choose between thy dross[1] and thy flesh and blood, and as thou choosest so shall it be."

"So may Abraham, Jacob, and all the fathers of our people, assist me," said Isaac, "I cannot make the choice, because I have not the means of satisfying your exorbitant demand."

"Seize him and strip him, slaves," said the knight, "and let the fathers of his race assist him if they can."

The assistants, taking their directions more from the baron's eye and his hand than his tongue, once more stepped forward, laid hands on the unfortunate Isaac, plucked him up from the ground, and, holding him between them, waited the hard-hearted baron's further signal. The unhappy Jew eyed their countenances and that of Front-de-Bœuf, in hope of discovering some symptoms of relenting; but that of the baron exhibited the same cold, half-sullen, half-sarcastic smile which had been the prelude to his cruelty; and the savage eyes of the Saracens, rolling gloomily under their dark brows, acquiring a yet more sinister expression by the whiteness of the circle which surrounds the pupil, evinced rather the secret pleasure which they expected from the approaching scene than any reluctance to be its directors or agents. The Jew then looked at the glowing furnace

[1] Refuse in melting metals; here used contemptuously for money.

over which he was presently to be stretched, and, seeing no chance of his tormentor's relenting, his resolution gave way.

"I will pay," he said, "the thousand pounds of silver—that is," he added after a moment's pause, "I will pay it with the help of my brethren; for I must beg as a mendicant at the door of our synagogue ere I make up so unheard of a sum. When and where must it be delivered?"

"Here," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "here it must be delivered; weighed it must be—weighed and told down on this very dungeon floor. Thinkest thou I will part with thee until thy ransom is secure?"

"And what is to be my surety," said the Jew, "that I shall be at liberty after this ransom is paid?"

"The word of a Norman noble, thou pawnbroking slave," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "the faith of a Norman nobleman, more pure than the gold and silver of thee and all thy tribe."

"I crave pardon, noble lord," said Isaac timidly, "but wherefore should I rely wholly on the word of one who will trust nothing to mine?"

"Because thou canst not help it, Jew," said the knight sternly. "Wert thou now in thy treasure-chamber at York, and were I craving a loan of thy shekels, it would be thine to dictate the time of payment and the pledge of security. This is *my* treasure-chamber. Here I have thee at advantage, nor will I again deign to repeat the terms on which I grant thee liberty."

The Jew groaned deeply. "Grant me," he said, "at least, with my own liberty, that of the companions with whom I travel. They scorned me as a Jew, yet they pitied my desolation, and, because they tarried to aid me by the way, a share of my evil hath come upon them; moreover, they may contribute in some sort to my ransom."

"If thou meanest yonder Saxon churls," said Front-de-Bœuf, "their ransom will depend upon other terms than thine. Mind thine own concerns, Jew, I warn thee, and meddle not with those of others."

"I am, then," said Isaac, "only to be set at liberty, together with mine wounded friend?"

"Shall I twice recommend it," said Front-de-Bœuf, "to a son of Israel, to meddle with his own concerns, and leave those of others alone? Since thou hast made thy choice, it remains but that thou payest down thy ransom, and that at a short day."

"Yet hear me," said the Jew: "for the sake of that very wealth which thou wouldst obtain at the expense of thy"— Here he stopped short, afraid of irritating the savage Norman; but Front-de-Bœuf only laughed, and himself filled up the blank at which the Jew had hesitated. "At the expense of my conscience, thou wouldst say, Isaac. Speak it out. I tell thee I am reasonable. I can bear the reproaches of a loser, even when that loser is a Jew. Thou wert not so patient, Isaac, when thou didst invoke justice against Jacques Fitzdotterel for calling thee a usurious blood-sucker, when thy exactions had devoured his patrimony."

"I swear by the Talmud,"[1] said the Jew, "that your valor has been misled in that matter. Fitzdotterel drew his poniard upon me in mine own chamber because I craved him for mine own silver. The term of payment was due at the Passover."

"I care not what he did," said Front-de-Bœuf: "the question is, when shall I have mine own? When shall I have the shekels, Isaac?"

"Let my daughter Rebecca go forth to York," answered Isaac, "with your safe-conduct, noble knight; and so soon as man and horse can return, the treasure"— Here he groaned deeply, but added, after the pause of a few seconds, "the treasure shall be told down on this very floor."

"Thy daughter!" said Front-de-Bœuf, as if surprised. "By heavens, Isaac, I would I had known of this! Yonder black-browed girl I gave to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

The yell which Isaac raised at this unfeeling communication made the very vault to ring, and astounded the two Saracens so

[1] The law (civil and canonical) of the Jewish people.

much that they let go their hold of the Jew. He availed himself of his enlargement to throw himself on the pavement and clasp the knees of Front-de-Bœuf.

"Take all that you have asked," said he, "Sir Knight, take ten times more, reduce me to ruin and to beggary if thou wilt, nay, pierce me with thy poniard, broil me on that furnace, but spare my daughter, spare a helpless maiden. She is the image of my deceased Rachel. Will you deprive a widowed husband of his sole remaining comfort? Will you reduce a father to wish that his only living child were laid beside her dead mother in the tomb of our fathers?"

"I would," said the Norman, somewhat relenting, "that I had known of this before. I thought your race had loved nothing save their money-bags."

"Think not so vilely of us, Jews though we be," said Isaac, eager to improve the moment of apparent sympathy. "The hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat, loves its young: the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children!"

"Be it so," said Front-de-Bœuf. "I will believe it in future, Isaac, for thy very sake; but it aids us not now. I cannot help what has happened, or what is to follow. My word is passed to my comrade in arms, nor would I break it for ten Jews."

"Robber and villain!" said the Jew, retorting with passion which, however impotent, he now found it impossible to bridle, "I will pay thee nothing—not one silver penny will I pay thee — unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety!"

"Art thou in thy senses, Israelite?" said the Norman sternly. "Has thy flesh and blood a charm against heated iron and scalding oil?"

"I care not!" said the Jew, rendered desperate by paternal affection. "Do thy worst. My daughter is my flesh and blood, dearer to me a thousand times than those limbs which thy cruelty threatens. No silver will I give thee, unless I were to pour it molten down thy avaricious throat—no, not a silver penny will I give thee, Nazarene! Take my life if thou wilt, and

say the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian."

"We shall see that," said Front-de-Bœuf; "for by the blessed rood, which is the abomination of thy tribe, thou shalt feel the extremities of fire and steel! — Strip him, slaves, and chain him down upon the bars."

In spite of the feeble struggles of the old man, the Saracens had already torn from him his upper garment, and were proceeding totally to disrobe him, when the sound of a bugle, twice winded without the castle, penetrated even to the recesses of the dungeon, and immediately after loud voices were heard calling for Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. Unwilling to be found engaged in his occupation, the savage baron gave the slaves a signal to restore Isaac's garment, and, quitting the dungeon with his attendants, he left the Jew to thank God for his own deliverance, or to lament over his daughter's captivity, as his personal or parental feelings might prove strongest.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE apartment to which the Lady Rowena had been introduced was fitted up with some rude attempts at ornament and magnificence, and her being placed there might be considered as a peculiar mark of respect not offered to the other prisoners. But the wife of Front-de-Bœuf, for whom it had been originally furnished, was long dead, and decay and neglect had impaired the few ornaments with which her taste had adorned it. The tapestry hung down from the walls in many places, and in others was tarnished and faded under the effects of the sun, or tattered and decayed by age. Desolate, however, as it was, this was the apartment of the castle which had been judged most fitting for the accommodation of the Saxon heiress; and here she was left to meditate upon her fate until the actors in this nefa-

rious drama had arranged the several parts which each of them was to perform. This had been settled in a council held by Front-de-Bœuf, De Bracy, and the Templar, in which, after a long and warm debate concerning the several advantages which each insisted upon deriving from his peculiar share in this audacious enterprise, they had at length determined the fate of their unhappy prisoners.

It was about the hour of noon, therefore, when De Bracy, for whose advantage the expedition had been first planned, appeared to prosecute his views upon the hand and possessions of the Lady Rowena.

The interval had not entirely been bestowed in holding council with his confederates, for De Bracy had found leisure to decorate his person with all the foppery of the times. His green cassock and vizard were now flung aside. His long, luxuriant hair was trained to flow in quaint tresses down his richly furred cloak. His beard was closely shaved, his doublet reached to the middle of his leg, and the girdle which secured it, and at the same time supported his ponderous sword, was embroidered and embossed with gold-work. We have already noticed the extravagant fashion of the shoes at this period; and the points of Maurice de Bracy's might have challenged the prize of extravagance with the gayest, being turned up and twisted like the horns of a ram. Such was the dress of a gallant of the period; and, in the present instance, that effect was aided by the handsome person and good demeanor of the wearer, whose manners partook alike of the grace of a courtier and the frankness of a soldier.

He saluted Rowena by doffing his velvet bonnet garnished with a golden brooch representing St. Michael trampling down the Prince of Evil. With this he gently motioned the lady to a seat; and, as she still retained her standing posture, the knight ungloved his right hand, and motioned to conduct her thither. But Rowena declined, by her gesture, the proffered compliment, and replied, "If I be in the presence of my jailer, Sir Knight, — nor will circumstances allow me to think otherwise, —

it best becomes his prisoner to remain standing till she learns her doom."

"Alas, fair Rowena!" returned De Bracy, "you are in the presence of your captive, not your jailer; and it is from your fair eyes that De Bracy must receive that doom which you fondly expect from him."

"I know you not, sir," said the lady, drawing herself up with all the pride of offended rank and beauty — "I know you not; and the insolent familiarity with which you apply to me the jargon of a troubadour forms no apology for the violence of a robber."

"To thyself, fair maid," answered De Bracy in his former tone, "be ascribed whate'er I have done which passed the respect due to her whom I have chosen queen of my heart, and loadstar of my eyes."

"I repeat to you, Sir Knight, that I know you not, and that no man wearing chain and spurs ought thus to intrude himself upon the presence of an unprotected lady."

"That I am unknown to you," said De Bracy, "is indeed my misfortune; yet let me hope that De Bracy's name has not been always unspoken when minstrels or heralds have praised deeds of chivalry, whether in the lists or in the battle-field."

"To heralds and to minstrels, then, leave thy praise, Sir Knight," replied Rowena, "more suiting for their mouths than for thine own; and tell me which of them shall record in song, or in book of tourney, the memorable conquest of this night, — a conquest obtained over an old man, followed by a few timid hinds; and its booty an unfortunate maiden, transported against her will to the castle of a robber."

"You are unjust, Lady Rowena," said the knight, biting his lips in some confusion, and speaking in a tone more natural to him than that of affected gallantry, which he had at first adopted.

"Sir Knight," said Rowena, "certes, you constrain[1] me to sit down, since you enter upon such commonplace terms, of which

[1] Compel.

each crowder[1] hath a stock that might last from hence to Christmas."

"Proud damsel," said De Bracy, incensed at finding his gallant style procured him nothing but contempt—"proud damsel, thou shalt be as proudly encountered. Know, then, that I have supported my pretensions to your hand in the way that best suited thy character. It is meeter for thy humor to be wooed with bow and bill than in set terms and in courtly language."

"Courtesy of tongue," said Rowena, "when it is used to veil churlishness of deed, is but a knight's girdle around the breast of a base clown. I wonder not that the restraint appears to gall you. More it were for your honor to have retained the dress and language of an outlaw than to veil the deeds of one under an affectation of gentle language and demeanor."

"You counsel well, lady," said the Norman; "and in the bold language which best justifies bold action, I tell thee thou shalt never leave this castle, or thou shalt leave it as Maurice de Bracy's wife. I am not wont to be baffled in my enterprises, nor needs a Norman noble scrupulously to vindicate his conduct to the Saxon maiden whom he distinguishes by the offer of his hand. Thou art proud, Rowena, and thou art the fitter to be my wife. By what other means couldst thou be raised to high honor and to princely place saving by my alliance? How else wouldst thou escape from the mean precincts of a country grange,[2] where Saxons herd with the swine which form their wealth, to take thy seat, honored as thou shouldst be, and shalt be, amid all in England that is distinguished by beauty or dignified by power?"

"Sir Knight," replied Rowena, "the grange which you contemn hath been my shelter from infancy; and, trust me, when I leave it, should that day ever arrive, it shall be with one who has not learned to despise the dwelling and manners in which I have been brought up."

[1] Player; especially a player of a *crowd*, a kind of fiddle.

[2] Farm, including buildings, etc.

"I guess your meaning, lady," said De Bracy, "though you may think it lies too obscure for my apprehension. But dream not that Richard Cœur-de-Lion will ever resume his throne, far less that Wilfred of Ivanhoe, his minion, will ever lead thee to his footstool, to be there welcomed as the bride of a favorite. Know, lady, that this rival is in my power, and that it rests but with me to betray the secret of his being within the castle to Front-de-Bœuf, whose jealousy will be more fatal than mine."

"Wilfred here?" said Rowena in disdain: "that is as true as that Front-de-Bœuf is his rival."

De Bracy looked at her steadily for an instant. "Wert thou really ignorant of this?" said he. "Didst thou not know that Wilfred of Ivanhoe traveled in the litter of the Jew?—a meet conveyance for the crusader whose doughty arm was to conquer the Holy Sepulcher!" and he laughed scornfully.

"And if he is here," said Rowena, compelling herself to a tone of indifference, though trembling with an agony of apprehension which she could not suppress, "in what is he the rival of Front-de-Bœuf? or what has he to fear beyond a short imprisonment and an honorable ransom, according to the use of chivalry?"

"Rowena," said De Bracy, "art thou, too, deceived by the common error of thy sex, who think there can be no rivalry but that respecting their own charms? Knowest thou not there is a jealousy of ambition and of wealth, as well as of love, and that this our host, Front-de-Bœuf, will push from his road him who opposes his claim to the fair barony of Ivanhoe as readily as if he were preferred to him by some blue-eyed damsel? But smile on my suit, lady, and the wounded champion shall have nothing to fear from Front-de-Bœuf, whom else thou mayest mourn for as in the hands of one who has never shown compassion."

"Save him, for the love of Heaven!" said Rowena, her firmness giving way under terror for her lover's impending fate.

"I can, I will, it is my purpose," said De Bracy; "for when Rowena consents to be the bride of De Bracy, who is it shall

dare to put forth a violent hand upon her kinsman, the son of her guardian, the companion of her youth? I am not romantic fool enough to further the fortune or avert the fate of one who is likely to be a successful obstacle between me and my wishes. Use thine influence with me in his behalf, and he is safe: refuse to employ it, Wilfred dies, and thou thyself art not the nearer to freedom."

"Thy language," answered Rowena, "hath in its indifferent bluntness something which cannot be reconciled with the horrors it seems to express. I believe not that thy purpose is so wicked or thy power so great."

"Flatter thyself, then, with that belief," said De Bracy, "until time shall prove it false. Thy lover lies wounded in this castle, — thy preferred lover. He is a bar betwixt Front-de-Bœuf and that which Front-de-Bœuf loves better than either ambition or beauty. What will it cost beyond the blow of a poniard, or the thrust of a javelin, to silence his opposition forever? Nay, were Front-de-Bœuf afraid to justify a deed so open, let the leech but give his patient a wrong draught; let the chamberlain,[1] or the nurse who tends him, but pluck the pillow from his head, — and Wilfred, in his present condition, is sped without the effusion of blood. Cedric also" —

"And Cedric also," said Rowena, repeating his words, "my noble, my generous guardian! I deserve the evil I have encountered for forgetting his fate even in that of his son!"

"Cedric's fate also depends upon thy determination," said De Bracy, "and I leave thee to form it."

Hitherto, Rowena had sustained her part in this trying scene with undismayed courage, but it was because she had not considered the danger as serious and imminent. Her disposition was naturally mild, timid, and gentle, but it had been tempered and hardened by her education. Accustomed to see the will of others give way before her, she had acquired that self-confidence

[1] An officer having charge of the chambers or apartments of a person of rank.

which arises from the habitual and constant deference of the circle in which we move.

Her haughtiness and habit of domination was therefore a fictitious character; and it deserted her when she found her will, the slightest expression of which was wont to command respect and attention, now placed in opposition to a man of a strong, fierce, and determined mind, who possessed the advantage, and was resolved to use it. She quailed before him.

After casting her eyes around as if to look for the aid which was nowhere to be found, and after a few broken interjections, she raised her hands to Heaven, and burst into a passion of uncontrolled vexation and sorrow. It was impossible to see so beautiful a creature in such extremity without feeling for her; and De Bracy was not unmoved, though he was yet more embarrassed than touched. He paced the apartment to and fro, now vainly exhorting the terrified maiden to compose herself, now hesitating concerning his own line of conduct.

"If," thought he, "I should be moved by the tears and sorrow of this disconsolate damsel, what should I reap but the loss of those fair hopes for which I have encountered so much risk, and the ridicule of Prince John and his jovial comrades? And yet," he said to himself, "I feel myself ill framed for the part which I am playing. I cannot look on so fair a face while it is disturbed with agony, or on those eyes when they are drowned in tears. I would she had retained her original haughtiness of disposition, or that I had a larger share of Front-de-Bœuf's thrice-tempered hardness of heart!"

Agitated by these thoughts, he could only bid the unfortunate Rowena be comforted, and assure her that as yet she had no reason for the excess of despair to which she was now giving way; but in this task of consolation De Bracy was interrupted by the horn, "hoarse-winded blowing far and keen," which had at the same time alarmed the other inmates of the castle, and interrupted their several plans.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHILE the scenes we have described were passing in other parts of the castle, the Jewess Rebecca awaited her fate in a distant and sequestered turret. Hither she had been led by two of her disguised captors, and, on being thrust into the little cell, she found herself in the presence of an old sibyl,[1] who kept murmuring to herself a Saxon rhyme, as if to beat time to the revolving dance which her spindle[2] was performing upon the floor. The hag raised her head as Rebecca entered, and scowled at the fair Jewess with the malignant envy with which old age and ugliness, when united with evil conditions, are apt to look upon youth and beauty.

"Thou must up and away, old house-cricket," said one of the men: "our noble master commands it. Thou must leave this chamber to a fairer guest."

"Ay," grumbled the hag, "even thus is service requited. I have known when my bare word would have cast the best man-at-arms among ye out of saddle and out of service; and now must I up and away at the command of every groom such as thou."

"Good Dame Urfried," said the other man, "stand not to reason on it, but up and away! Lord's hests[3] must be listened to with a quick ear. Thou hast had thy day, old dame, but thy sun has long been set. Thou art now the very emblem of an old war-horse turned out on the barren heath: thou hast had thy paces in thy time, but now a broken amble is the best of them. Come, amble off with thee!"

"Ill omens dog ye both," said the old woman, "and a kennel be your burying-place! May the evil demon Zernebock[4] tear

[1] Latin, *sibylla* ("a prophetess").

[2] One of the parts of a spinning-wheel, which twists and winds the thread.

[3] Behests; commands.

[4] A Scandinavian god.

me limb from limb if I leave my own cell ere I have spun out the hemp on my distaff!"[1]

"Answer it to our lord, then," said the man, and retired, leaving Rebecca in company with the old woman, upon whose presence she had been thus unwillingly forced.

"What have they now in the wind?" said the old hag, murmuring to herself, yet from time to time casting a sidelong and malignant glance at Rebecca. "Bright eyes, black locks. Outlandish, too," she said, marking the dress and turban of Rebecca. "What country art thou of,—a Saracen, or an Egyptian? Why dost not answer? Thou canst weep, canst thou not speak?"

"Be not angry, good mother," said Rebecca.

"Thou needst say no more," replied Urfried. "Men know a fox by the train, and a Jewess by her tongue."

"For the sake of mercy," said Rebecca, "tell me what I am to expect."

"Jew or Gentile, thou hast to do with them that have neither scruple nor pity. Fare thee well, I say! My thread is spun out," answered the old woman.

She left the room as she spoke, her features writhed into a sort of sneering laugh, which made them seem even more hideous than their habitual frown. She locked the door behind her, and Rebecca might hear her curse every step for its steepness, as slowly and with difficulty she descended the turret stair.

Rebecca's first care was to inspect the apartment; but it afforded few hopes either of escape or protection. It contained neither secret passage nor trap-door, and, unless where the door by which she had entered joined the main building, seemed to be circumscribed by the round exterior wall of the turret. The door had no inside bolt or bar. The single window opened upon an embattled space surmounting the turret, which gave Rebecca, at first sight, some hopes of escaping; but she soon found it had no communication with any other part of the battlements, being

[1] The staff that holds the flax, etc., from which the thread is pulled out in hand-spinning.

an isolated bartisan,[1] or balcony, secured as usual by a parapet[2] with embrasures, at which a few archers might be stationed for defending the turret, and flanking with their shot the wall of the castle on that side.

There was therefore no hope but in passive fortitude, and in that strong reliance on Heaven natural to great and generous characters.

The prisoner trembled, however, and changed color, when a step was heard on the stair, and the door of the turret-chamber slowly opened, and a tall man, dressed as one of those banditti to whom they owed their misfortune, slowly entered, and shut the door behind him. His cap, pulled down upon his brows, concealed the upper part of his face, and he held his mantle in such a manner as to muffle the rest. In this guise he stood before the prisoner; yet, ruffian as his dress bespoke him, he seemed at a loss to express what purpose had brought him thither, so that Rebecca, making an effort upon herself, had time to anticipate his explanation. She had already unclasped two costly bracelets and a collar, which she hastened to proffer to the supposed outlaw, concluding naturally that to gratify his avarice was to bespeak his favor.

"Take these," she said, "good friend, and for God's sake be merciful to me and my aged father!"

"It is well spoken," replied the outlaw in French, finding it difficult probably to sustain in Saxon a conversation which Rebecca had opened in that language; "but know, bright lily of the vale of Baca,[3] that thy father is already in the hands of a powerful alchemist,[4] who knows how to convert into gold and

[1] A small turret so placed at the angle of a tower or parapet, that, protruding and overhanging, it serves as a place of outlook or defense, having loopholes or embrasures, or both.

[2] A protecting wall, about breast-high, surmounting the edge of a roof or platform.

[3] See Psalm lxxxiv. 6.

[4] A person who sought to change baser metals into gold. The practice was called "alchemy," and from the general search made by its devotees to discover some such talisman sprang the science of modern chemistry.

silver even the rusty bars of a dungeon grate. The venerable Isaac is subjected to an alembic[1] which will distill[2] from him all he holds dear, without any assistance from my requests or thy entreaty."

"Thou art no outlaw," said Rebecca in the same language in which he addressed her. "No outlaw in this land uses the dialect in which thou hast spoken. Thou art no outlaw, but a Norman, — a Norman, noble perhaps in birth. Oh, be so in thy actions, and cast off this fearful mask!"

"And thou, who canst guess so truly," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, dropping the mantle from his face, "art no true daughter of Israel, but in all, save youth and beauty, a very Witch of Endor.[3] I am not an outlaw, then, fair rose of Sharon. I am a Templar. Behold the cross of my holy order."

"Darest thou appeal to it," said Rebecca, "on an occasion like the present?"

The eyes of the Templar flashed fire at this reproof. "Hearken," he said, "Rebecca! I have hitherto spoken mildly to thee, but now my language shall be that of a conqueror. Thou art the captive of my bow and spear, subject to my will by the laws of all nations; nor will I abate an inch of my right."

"Stand back," said Rebecca — "stand back, and hear me! My strength thou mayst indeed overpower, for God made women weak, and trusted their defense to man's generosity. But I will proclaim thy villainy, Templar, from one end of Europe to the other."

"Thou art keen-witted, Jewess," replied the Templar, "thou art sharp-witted, but one thing only can save thee, Rebecca. Submit to embrace our religion, and thou shalt go forth in such state that many a Norman lady shall yield as well in pomp as in

[1] Apparatus used for distilling. [2] Dissolve; get from.

[3] The witch consulted by Saul when Samuel was dead. She evoked the ghost of the prophet, and Saul was foretold of his death (see 1 Sam. xxviii. 7–20). Endor is a town of Manasseh in the territory of Issachar, south of Mount Tabor.

beauty to the favorite of the best lance among the defenders of the Temple."

"Submit," said Rebecca, "to embrace thy religion! And what religion can it be that harbors such a villain? *Thou* the best lance of the Templars, craven knight, forsworn priest, I defy thee. The God of Abraham's promise hath opened an escape to his daughter, even from this abyss of infamy."

As she spoke she threw open the latticed window which led to the bartisan, and in an instant after stood on the very verge of the parapet, with not the slightest screen between her and the tremendous depth below. Unprepared for such a desperate effort, for she had hitherto stood perfectly motionless, Bois-Guilbert had neither time to intercept nor to stop her. As he offered to advance, she exclaimed, "Remain where thou art, proud Templar, or at thy choice advance! One foot nearer, and I plunge myself from the precipice."

As she spoke this, she clasped her hands and extended them towards Heaven, as if imploring mercy on her soul before she made the final plunge. The Templar hesitated, and a resolution which had never yielded to pity or distress gave way to his admiration of her fortitude. "Come down," he said, "rash girl!"

"I will not trust thee, Templar," said Rebecca.

"You do me injustice," exclaimed the Templar fervently. "I swear to you by the name which I bear, by the cross on my bosom, by the sword on my side — by the ancient crest[1] of my fathers do I swear, I will do thee no injury. For thy father's sake forbear! I will be his friend, and in this castle he will need a powerful one."

"Alas!" said Rebecca, "I know it but too well. Dare I trust thee?"

"May my arms be reversed, and my name dishonored," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "if thou shalt have reason to complain of me! Many a law, many a commandment, have I broken, but my word never."

[1] An heraldic bearing above a coat of arms.

"I will, then, trust thee," said Rebecca, "thus far;" and she descended from the verge of the battlement, but remained standing close by one of the embrasures, or *machicolles*, as they were then called. "Here," she said, "I take my stand. Remain where thou art."

While Rebecca spoke thus, her high and firm resolve, which corresponded so well with the expressive beauty of her countenance, gave to her looks, air, and manner a dignity that seemed more than mortal. Her glance quailed not, her cheek blanched not. Bois-Guilbert, proud himself and high-spirited, thought he had never beheld beauty so commanding.

"Thou dost me injustice," said the Templar — "by earth, sea, and sky, thou dost me injustice! I am not naturally that which you have seen me, — hard, selfish, and relentless. It was woman that taught me cruelty. Hear me, Rebecca. Never did knight take lance in his hand with a heart more devoted to the lady of his love than Brian de Bois-Guilbert. Yes," he continued, pacing up and down the little platform with an animation in which he seemed to lose all consciousness of Rebecca's presence — "yes, my deeds, my danger, my blood, made the name of Adelaide de Montemare known from the court of Castile to that of Byzantium.[1] And how was I requited! When I returned with my dear-bought honors, purchased by toil and blood, I found her wedded to a Gascon squire, whose name was never heard beyond the limits of his own paltry domain. Truly did I love her, and bitterly did I revenge me of her broken faith; but my vengeance has recoiled on myself. Since that day I have separated myself from life and its ties. — Mine thou must be! Nay, start not," he added, "it must be with thine own consent, and on thine own terms. Thou must consent to share with me hopes more extended than can be viewed from the throne of a monarch. Hear me ere you answer, and judge ere you refuse. That bugle-sound announces something which may require my

[1] A city of ancient times, situated on the site of the modern Constantinople.

presence. Think on what I have said. Farewell! I will soon return, and hold further conference with thee."

He reëntered the turret-chamber, and descended the stair, leaving Rebecca. When she entered the turret-chamber, her first duty was to return thanks to the God of Jacob for the protection which he had afforded her, and to implore its continuance for her and for her father. Another name glided into her petition: it was that of the wounded Christian whom fate had placed in the hands of bloodthirsty men, his avowed enemies. Her heart indeed checked her, as if, even in communing with the Deity in prayer, she mingled in her devotions the recollection of one with whose fate hers could have no alliance, — a Nazarene, and an enemy to her faith. But the petition was already breathed; nor could all the narrow prejudices of her sect induce Rebecca to wish it recalled.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHEN the Templar reached the hall of the castle, he found De Bracy already there. "Your suit," said De Bracy, "hath, I suppose, been disturbed, like mine, by this obstreperous summons. But you have come later and more reluctantly, and therefore I presume your interview has proved more agreeable than mine."

"Has your suit, then, been unsuccessfully paid to the Saxon heiress?" said the Templar.

"By the bones of Thomas à Becket," answered De Bracy, "the Lady Rowena must have heard that I cannot endure the sight of women's tears."

"Away!" said the Templar; "thou a leader of a Free Company, and regard a woman's tears! But where is Front-de-Bœuf? That horn is sounded more and more clamorously."

"He is negotiating with the Jew, I suppose," replied De Bracy coolly. "Probably the howls of Isaac have drowned the blast of

the bugle. Thou mayest know by experience, Sir Brian, that a Jew parting with his treasures on such terms as our friend Front-de-Bœuf is like to offer will raise a clamor loud enough to be heard over twenty horns and trumpets to boot. But we will make the vassals call him."

They were soon after joined by Front-de-Bœuf, who had been disturbed in his tyrannic cruelty in the manner with which the reader is acquainted, and had only tarried to give some necessary directions.

"Let us see the cause of this cursed clamor," said Front-de-Bœuf. "Here is a letter, and, if I mistake not, it is in Saxon."

He looked at it, turning it round and round as if he had had really some hopes of coming at the meaning by inverting the position of the paper, and then handed it to De Bracy.

"It may be magic spells, for aught I know," said De Bracy, who possessed his full proportion of the ignorance which characterized the chivalry of the period. "Our chaplain attempted to teach me to write; but all my letters were formed like spear-heads and sword-blades, and so the old shaveling[1] gave up the task."

"Give it me," said the Templar. "We have that of the priestly character that we have some knowledge to enlighten our valor."

"Let us profit by your most reverend knowledge, then," said De Bracy. "What says the scroll?"[2]

"It is a formal letter of defiance," answered the Templar; "but, by Our Lady of Bethlehem,[3] if it be not a foolish jest, it is the most extraordinary cartel[4] that ever was sent across the drawbridge of a baronial castle."

"Jest!" said Front-de-Bœuf. "I would gladly know who dares jest with me in such a matter! — Read it, Sir Brian."

[1] A contemptuous expression for a monk, the name alluding to the shaven top of his head.

[2] Writing.

[3] The Virgin Mary.

[4] A letter expressing a challenge or defiance.

The Templar accordingly read it, as follows:—

"I, Wamba, the son of Witless, jester to a noble and freeborn man, Cedric of Rotherwood, called the Saxon; and I, Gurth, the son of Beowulph, the swineherd"—

"Thou art mad," said Front-de-Bœuf, interrupting the reader.

"By St. Luke, it is so set down," answered the Templar. Then, resuming his task, he went on: "I, Gurth, the son of Beowulph, swineherd unto the said Cedric, with the assistance of our allies and confederates, who make common cause with us in this our feud, namely, the good knight, called, for the present, *Le Noir Faineant*, and the stout yeoman, Robert Locksley, called Cleave-the-wand, Do you, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, and your allies and accomplices whomsoever, to wit, that whereas you have, without cause given or feud declared, wrongfully and by mastery seized upon the person of our lord and master the said Cedric; also upon the person of a noble and freeborn damsel, the Lady Rowena of Hargottstandstede; also upon the person of a noble and freeborn man, Athelstane of Coningsburgh; also upon the persons of certain freeborn men, their *cnichts;*[1] also upon certain serfs, their born bondsmen; also upon a certain Jew, named Isaac of York, together with his daughter, a Jewess, and certain horses and mules: Which noble persons, with their *cnichts* and slaves, and also with the horses and mules, Jew and Jewess beforesaid, were all in peace with his Majesty, and traveling as liege[2] subjects upon the King's highway; therefore we require and demand that the said noble persons, namely, Cedric of Rotherwood, Rowena of Hargottstandstede, Athelstane of Coningsburgh, with their servants, *cnichts*, and followers, also the horses and mules, Jew and Jewess aforesaid, together with all goods and chattels to them pertaining, be, within an hour after the delivery hereof, delivered to us, or to those whom we shall appoint to receive the same, and that untouched and unharmed

[1] Military attendants, sometimes free, sometimes bondsmen, but always ranking above an ordinary domestic; now spelled "knight."

[2] Free.

in body and goods. Failing of which, we do pronounce to you, that we hold ye as robbers and traitors, and will wager our bodies against ye in battle, siege, or otherwise, and do our utmost to your annoyance and destruction. Wherefore may God have you in his keeping. Signed by us upon the eve of St. Withold's day, under the great trysting oak in the Harthill Walk, the above being written by a holy man, Clerk to God, Our Lady, and St. Dunstan, in the Chapel of Copmanhurst."

At the bottom of this document was scrawled, in the first place, a rude sketch of a cock's head and comb, with a legend expressing this hieroglyphic[1] to be the sign-manual of Wamba, son of Witless. Under this respectable emblem stood a cross, stated to be the mark of Gurth, the son of Beowulph. Then were written, in rough, bold characters, the words *Le Noir Faineant;* and to conclude the whole, an arrow, neatly enough drawn, was described as the mark of the yeoman Locksley.

The knights heard this uncommon document read from end to end, and then gazed upon each other in silent amazement, as being utterly at a loss to know what it could portend. De Bracy was the first to break silence by an uncontrollable fit of laughter, wherein he was joined, though with more moderation, by the Templar. Front-de-Bœuf, on the contrary, seemed impatient of their ill-timed jocularity.

"I give you plain warning," he said, "fair sirs, that you had better consult how to bear yourselves under these circumstances than give way to such misplaced merriment."

"Front-de-Bœuf has not recovered his temper since his late overthrow," said De Bracy to the Templar: "he is cowed at the very idea of a cartel, though it come but from a fool and a swineherd."

"By St. Michael,"[2] answered Front-de-Bœuf, "I would thou

[1] From the Greek, *hieros* ("sacred") and *gluphein* ("to carve"), sacred carvings or characters.

[2] The archangel Michael, who with his angels warred with Satan and his rebellious angels in heaven (see Rev. xii. 7–9; also Milton's Paradise Lost).

couldst stand the whole brunt of this adventure thyself, De Bracy. These fellows dared not have acted with such inconceivable impudence had they not been supported by some strong bands There are enough of outlaws in this forest to resent my protecting the deer. I did but tie one fellow, who was taken red-handed and in the fact,[1] to the horns of a wild stag, which gored him to death in five minutes, and I had as many arrows shot at me as there were launched against yonder target at Ashby. — Here, fellow," he added to one of his attendants, "hast thou sent out to see by what force this precious challenge is to be supported?"

"There are at least two hundred men assembled in the woods," answered a squire who was in attendance.

"Here is a proper matter!"[2] said Front-de-Bœuf. "This comes of lending you the use of my castle, that cannot manage your undertaking quietly, but you must bring this nest of hornets about my ears!"

"Of hornets?" said De Bracy. "Of stingless drones, rather, — a band of lazy knaves, who take to the wood and destroy the venison rather than labor for their maintenance."

"Stingless!" replied Front-de-Bœuf. "Fork-headed shafts of a cloth-yard in length, and these shot within the breadth of a French crown, are sting enough."

"For shame, Sir Knight!" said the Templar. "Let us summon our people, and sally forth upon them. One knight, ay, one man-at-arms, were enough for twenty such peasants."

"Enough, and too much," said De Bracy. "I should only be ashamed to couch lance against them."

"True," answered Front-de-Bœuf, "were they black Turks or Moors,[3] Sir Templar, or the craven peasants of France, most valiant De Bracy; but these are English yeomen, over whom we shall have no advantage save what we may derive from our arms and horses, which will avail us little in the glades of the forest. Sally, saidst thou? We have scarce men enough to defend the

[1] In the act. [2] "A fine state of affairs!"

[3] Here referring to Arabs or Saracens generally.

castle. The best of mine are at York; so is all your band, De Bracy; and we have scarcely twenty, besides the handful that were engaged in this mad business."

"Thou dost not fear," said the Templar, "that they can assemble in force sufficient to attempt the castle?"

"Not so, Sir Brian," answered Front-de-Bœuf. "These outlaws have indeed a daring captain; but without machines, scaling-ladders, and experienced leaders, my castle may defy them."

"Send to thy neighbors," said the Templar. "Let them assemble their people, and come to the rescue of three knights besieged by a jester and a swineherd in the baronial castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

"You jest, Sir Knight," answered the baron, "but to whom should I send? Malvoisin is by this time at York with his retainers, and so are my other allies; and so should I have been but for this enterprise."

"Then send to York and recall our people," said De Bracy. "If they abide the shaking of my standard[1] or the sight of my Free Companions, I will give them credit for the boldest outlaws ever bent bow in greenwood."

"And who shall bear such a message?" said Front-de-Bœuf. "They will beset every path, and rip the errand out of his bosom. I have it," he added, after pausing for a moment — "Sir Templar, thou canst write as well as read, and if we can but find the writing materials of my chaplain, who died a twelvemonth since" —

"So please ye," said the squire, who was still in attendance, "I think old Urfried has them somewhere in keeping."

"Go, search them out, Engelred," said Front-de-Bœuf; "and then, Sir Templar, thou shalt return an answer to this bold challenge."

"I would rather do it at the sword's point than at that of the pen," said Bois-Guilbert; "but be it as you will."

He sat down, accordingly, and indited in the French language an epistle of the following tenor.

[1] That is, await his onset.

"Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, with his noble and knightly allies and confederates, receive no defiances at the hands of slaves, bondsmen, or fugitives. If the person calling himself the Black Knight have indeed a claim to the honors of chivalry, he ought to know that he stands degraded by his present association, and has no right to ask reckoning at the hands of good men of noble blood. Touching the prisoners we have made, we do in Christian charity require you to send a man of religion to receive their confession and reconcile them with God, since it is our fixed intention to execute them this morning before noon, so that their heads, being placed on the battlement, shall show to all men how lightly we esteem those who have bestirred themselves in their rescue. Wherefore, as above, we require you to send a priest to reconcile them to God, in doing which you shall render them the last earthly service."

This letter, being folded, was delivered to the squire, and by him to the messenger who waited without, as the answer to that which he had brought.

The yeoman, having thus accomplished his mission, returned to the headquarters of the allies, which were for the present established under a venerable oak-tree about three arrow-flights distant from the castle. Here Wamba and Gurth, with their allies the Black Knight and Locksley, and the jovial hermit, awaited with impatience an answer to their summons. Around, and at a distance from them, were seen many a bold yeoman, whose silvan dress and weather-beaten countenances showed the ordinary nature of their occupation. More than two hundred had already assembled, and others were fast coming in. Those whom they obeyed as leaders were only distinguished from the others by a feather in the cap; their dress, arms, and equipments being in all other respects the same.

Besides these bands, a less orderly and a worse armed force, consisting of the Saxon inhabitants of the neighboring township, as well as many bondsmen and servants from Cedric's extensive estate, had already arrived for the purpose of assisting in his res-

cue. Few of these were armed otherwise than with such rustic weapons as necessity sometimes converts to military purposes. Boar-spears, scythes, flails, and the like, were their chief arms; for the Normans, with the usual policy of conquerors, were jealous of permitting to the vanquished Saxons the possession or the use of swords and spears. These circumstances rendered the assistance of the Saxons far from being so formidable to the besieged as the strength of the men themselves, their superior numbers, and the animation inspired by a just cause, might otherwise well have made them. It was to the leaders of this motley army that the letter of the Templar was now delivered.

Reference was at first made to the chaplain for an exposition of its contents.

"By the crook[1] of St. Dunstan," said that worthy ecclesiastic, "which hath brought more sheep within the sheepfold than the crook of e'er another saint in Paradise, I swear that I cannot expound unto you this jargon, which, whether it be French or Arabic, is beyond my guess."

He then gave the letter to Gurth, who shook his head gruffly, and passed it to Wamba. The Jester looked at each of the four corners of the paper with such a grin of affected intelligence as a monkey is apt to assume upon similar occasions, then cut a caper and gave the letter to Locksley.

"If the long letters were bows, and the short letters broad arrows, I might know something of the matter," said the honest yeoman; "but as the matter stands, the meaning is as safe for me as the stag that's at twelve miles' distance."

"I must be clerk, then," said the Black Knight; and, taking the letter from Locksley, he first read it over to himself, and then explained the meaning in Saxon to his confederates.

"Execute the noble Cedric!" exclaimed Wamba. "By the rood, thou must be mistaken, Sir Knight."

"Not I, my worthy friend," replied the knight: "I have explained the words as they are here set down."

[1] The staff of office of a bishop (see note, p. 11).

"Then, by St. Thomas of Canterbury," replied Gurth, "we will have the castle, should we tear it down with our hands!"

"We have nothing else to tear it with," replied Wamba; "but mine are scarce fit to make mammocks[1] of freestone and mortar."

"'Tis but a contrivance to gain time," said Locksley. "They dare not do a deed for which I could exact a fearful penalty."

"I would," said the Black Knight, "there were some one among us who could obtain admission into the castle, and discover how the case stands with the besieged. Methinks, as they require a confessor to be sent, this holy hermit might at once exercise his pious vocation, and procure us the information we desire."

"A plague on thee and thy advice!" said the good hermit. "I tell thee, Sir Slothful Knight, that when I doff my friar's frock, my priesthood, my sanctity, my very Latin, are put off along with it; and when in my green jerkin, I can better kill twenty deer than confess one Christian."

"I fear," said the Black Knight — "I fear greatly, there is no one here that is qualified to take upon him, for the nonce,[2] this same character of father confessor."[3]

All looked on each other, and were silent.

"I see," said Wamba after a short pause, "that the fool must be still the fool, and put his neck in the venture which wise men shrink from. You must know, my dear cousins and countrymen, that I wore russet[4] before I wore motley, and was bred to be a friar, until a brain-fever came upon me, and left me just wit enough to be a fool. I trust, with the assistance of the good hermit's frock, together with the priesthood, sanctity, and learning which are stitched into the cowl of it, I shall be found qualified to administer both worldly and ghostly[5] comfort to our worthy master Cedric and his companions in adversity."

[1] Fragments. [2] Present.

[3] A priest who listens to confessions from others, and grants absolution.

[4] Homespun. [5] Spiritual.

"Hath he sense enough, thinkst thou?" said the Black Knight, addressing Gurth.

"I know not," said Gurth; "but if he hath not, it will be the first time he hath wanted wit to turn his folly to account."

"On with the frock, then, good fellow," quoth the knight, "and let the master send us an account of their situation within the castle. Their numbers must be few, and it is five to one they may be accessible by a sudden and bold attack. Time wears. Away with thee!"

"And in the mean time," said Locksley, "we will beset the place so closely that not so much as a fly shall carry news from thence. — So that, my good friend," he continued, addressing Wamba, "thou mayest assure these tyrants that whatever violence they exercise on the persons of their prisoners shall be most severely repaid upon their own."

"*Pax vobiscum!*"[1] said Wamba, who was now muffled in his religious disguise.

And so saying, he imitated the solemn and stately deportment of a friar, and departed to execute his mission.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHEN the Jester, arrayed in the cowl and frock of the hermit, and having his knotted cord twisted around his middle, stood before the portal of the castle of Front-de-Bœuf, the warder[2] demanded of him his name and errand.

"*Pax vobiscum!*" answered the Jester, "I am a poor brother of the Order of St. Francis, who come hither to do my office to certain unhappy prisoners now secured within this castle."

"Thou art a bold friar," said the warder, "to come hither, where, saving our own confessor, a cock of thy feather hath not crowed these twenty years."

[1] "Peace be with you!"

[2] The gate-keeper.

"Yet, I pray thee, do mine errand to the lord of the castle," answered the pretended friar. "Trust me, it will find good acceptance with him; and the cock shall crow, that the whole castle shall hear him."

"Gramercy," said the warder; "but if I come to shame for leaving my post upon thine errand, I will try whether a friar's gray gown be proof agaist a gray-goose shaft."[1]

With this threat he left his turret, and carried to the hall of the castle his unwonted intelligence that a holy friar stood before the gate and demanded instant admission. With no small wonder he received his master's commands to admit the holy man immediately; and, having previously manned the entrance to guard against surprise, he obeyed, without further scruple, the commands which he had received. The harebrained self-conceit which had emboldened Wamba to undertake this dangerous office was scarce sufficient to support him when he found himself in the presence of a man so dreadful and so much dreaded as Reginald Front-de-Bœuf; and he brought out his *pax vobiscum*, to which he in a good measure trusted for supporting his character, with more anxiety and hesitation than had hitherto accompanied it. But Front-de-Bœuf was accustomed to see men of all ranks tremble in his presence, so that the timidity of the supposed father did not give him any cause of suspicion. "Who and whence art thou, priest?" said he.

"*Pax vobiscum!*" reiterated the Jester, "I am a poor servant of St. Francis, who, traveling through this wilderness, have fallen among thieves (as Scripture hath it), *quidam viator incidit in latrones*, which thieves have sent me unto this castle in order to do my ghostly office on two persons condemned by your honorable justice."

"Ay, right," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "and canst thou tell me, holy father, the number of those banditti?"

"Gallant sir," answered the Jester, "*nomen illis legio*, their name is legion."

[1] An arrow for a longbow.

"Tell me in plain terms what numbers there are, or, priest, thy cloak and cord will ill protect thee."

"Alas!" said the supposed friar, "*cor meum eructavit*, that is to say, I was like to burst with fear; but I conceive they may be, what of yeomen, what of commons, at least five hundred men."

"What!" said the Templar, who came into the hall that moment, "muster the wasps so thick here? It is time to stifle such a mischievous brood." Then, taking Front-de-Bœuf aside, "Knowest thou the priest?"

"He is a stranger from a distant convent," said Front-de-Bœuf. "I know him not."

"Then trust him not with thy purpose in words," answered the Templar. "Let him carry a written order to De Bracy's company of Free Companions to repair instantly to their master's aid. In the mean time, and that the shaveling may suspect nothing, permit him to go freely about his task of preparing these Saxon hogs for the slaughter-house."

"It shall be so," said Front-de-Bœuf; and he forthwith appointed a domestic to conduct Wamba to the apartment where Cedric and Athelstane were confined.

The impatience of Cedric had been rather enhanced than diminished by his confinement. He walked from one end of the hall to the other with the attitude of one who advances to charge an enemy or to storm the breach of a beleaguered place, sometimes ejaculating to himself, sometimes addressing Athelstane, who stoutly and stoically awaited the issue of the adventure, digesting, in the mean time, with great composure, the liberal meal which he had made at noon, and not greatly interesting himself about the duration of his captivity, which he concluded would, like all earthly evils, find an end in Heaven's good time.

"*Pax vobiscum!*" said the Jester, entering the apartment, "the blessing of St. Dunstan, St. Dennis,[1] St. Duthoc, and all other saints whatsoever, be upon ye and about ye!"

[1] Patron saint of France, and first bishop of Paris; martyred in the third century.

"Enter freely," answered Cedric to the supposed friar. "With what intent art thou come hither?"

"To bid you prepare yourselves for death," answered the Jester.

"It is impossible!" replied Cedric, starting. "Fearless and wicked as they are, they dare not attempt such open and gratuitous cruelty!"

"Alas!" said the Jester, "to restrain them by their sense of humanity is the same as to stop a runaway horse with a bridle of silk thread. Bethink thee, therefore, noble Cedric, — and you also, gallant Athelstane, — what crimes you have committed in the flesh; for this very day will ye be called to answer at a higher tribunal."

"Hearest thou this, Athelstane?" said Cedric. "We must rouse up our hearts to this last action, since better it is we should die like men than live like slaves."

"I am ready," answered Athelstane, "to stand the worst of their malice, and shall walk to my death with as much composure as ever I did to my dinner."

"Let us, then, unto our holy gear,[1] father," said Cedric.

"Wait yet a moment, good uncle," said the Jester in his natural tone. "Better look long, before you leap in the dark."

"By my faith," said Cedric, "I should know that voice."

"It is that of your trusty slave and jester," answered Wamba, throwing back his cowl. "Had you taken a fool's advice formerly, you would not have been here at all. Take a fool's advice now, and you will not be here long."

"How meanest thou, knave?" answered the Saxon.

"Even thus," replied Wamba: "take thou this frock and cord, which are all the orders[2] I ever had, and march quietly out of the castle, leaving me your cloak and girdle to take the long leap[3] in thy stead."

1 Holy matters.

2 Ordination; admission into the ministry.

3 The leap into eternity; death.

"Leave thee in my stead!" said Cedric, astonished at the proposal. "Why, they would hang thee, my poor knave."

"E'en let them do as they are permitted," said Wamba. "I trust — no disparagement to your birth — that the son of Witless may hang in a chain with as much gravity as the chain[1] hung upon his ancestor the alderman."

"Well, Wamba," answered Cedric, "for one thing will I grant thy request; and that is, if thou wilt make the exchange of garments with Lord Athelstane instead of me."

"No, by St. Dunstan," answered Wamba, "there were little reason in that. Good right there is that the son of Witless should suffer to save the son of Hereward, but little wisdom there were in his dying for the benefit of one whose fathers were strangers to his."

"Villain," said Cedric, "the fathers of Athelstane were monarchs of England!"

"They might be whomsoever they pleased," replied Wamba; "but my neck stands too straight upon my shoulders to have it twisted for their sake. Wherefore, good my master, either take my proffer yourself, or suffer me to leave this dungeon as free as I entered."

"Let the old tree wither," continued Cedric, "so the stately hope of the forest be preserved. Save the noble Athelstane, my trusty Wamba! It is the duty of each who has Saxon blood in his veins. Thou and I will abide together the utmost rage of our injurious oppressors, while he, free and safe, shall arouse the awakened spirits of our countrymen to avenge us."

"Not so, father Cedric," said Athelstane, grasping his hand, for, when roused to think or act, his deeds and sentiments were not unbecoming his high race. "Not so," he continued. "I would rather remain in this hall a week without food save the prisoner's stinted loaf, or drink save the prisoner's measure of water, than embrace the opportunity to escape which the slave's untaught kindness has purveyed for his master."

[1] The gold chain was the alderman's mark of office.

"You are called wise men, sirs," said the Jester, "and I a crazed fool; but, uncle Cedric and cousin Athelstane, the fool shall decide this controversy for ye, and save ye the trouble of straining courtesies any further. I am like John-a-Duck's mare, that will let no man mount her but John-a-Duck. I came to save my master, and if he will not consent — basta[1] — I can but go away home again. Kind service cannot be chucked from hand to hand like a shuttlecock or stoolball.[2] I'll hang for no man but my own born master."

"Go, then, noble Cedric," said Athelstane. "Neglect not this opportunity. Your presence without may encourage friends to our rescue: your remaining here would ruin us all."

"And is there any prospect, then, of rescue from without?" said Cedric, looking at the Jester.

"Prospect, indeed!" echoed Wamba. "Let me tell you. When you fill my cloak, you are wrapped in a general's cassock. Five hundred men are there without, and I was this morning one of their chief leaders. My fool's cap was a casque, and my bauble, a truncheon. Well, we shall see what good they will make by exchanging a fool for a wise man. Truly, I fear they will lose in valor what they may gain in discretion. And so farewell, master! and be kind to poor Gurth and his dog Fangs; and let my coxcomb[3] hang in the hall at Rotherwood, in memory that I flung away my life for my master, like a faithful — fool."

The last word came out with a sort of double expression, betwixt jest and earnest. The tears stood in Cedric's eyes.

"Thy memory shall be preserved," he said, "while fidelity and affection have honor upon earth. But that I trust I shall find the means of saving Rowena, — and thee, Athelstane, — and

[1] Stop.

[2] A ball used in playing the game of stoolball, — a game usually played by women alone, and much resembling cricket.

[3] The short stick customarily carried by fools or jesters: it bore a fool's head carved upon it.

thee, also, my poor Wamba, — thou shouldst not overbear me in this matter."

The exchange of dress was now accomplished, when a sudden doubt struck Cedric.

"I know no language," he said, "but my own, and a few words of their mincing[1] Norman. How shall I bear myself like a reverend brother?"

"The spell lies in two words," replied Wamba: "*Pax vobiscum* will answer all queries. If you go or come, eat or drink, bless or ban, *Pax vobiscum* carries you through it all. It is as useful to a friar as a broomstick to a witch, or a wand to a conjurer. Speak it but thus, in a deep, grave tone, — *Pax vobiscum!* — it is irresistible. Watch and ward, knight and squire, foot and horse, it acts as a charm upon them all. I think, if they bring me out to be hanged to-morrow, as is much to be doubted they may, I will try its weight upon the finisher of the sentence."

"If such prove the case," said his master, "my religious orders are soon taken, *Pax vobiscum.* I trust I shall remember the password. Noble Athelstane, farewell! — And farewell, my poor boy, whose heart might make amends for a weaker head! I will save you, or return and die with you. The royal blood of our Saxon kings shall not be spilt while mine beats in my veins; nor shall one hair fall from the head of the kind knave who risked himself for his master, if Cedric's peril can prevent it. Farewell!"

"Farewell, noble Cedric," said Athelstane. "Remember, it is the true part of a friar to accept refreshment, if you are offered any."

"Farewell, uncle," added Wamba; "and remember *Pax vobiscum.*"

Thus exhorted, Cedric sallied forth upon his expedition; and it was not long ere he had occasion to try the force of that spell which his Jester had recommended as omnipotent. In a low-arched and dusky passage, by which he endeavored to work his way to the hall of the castle, he was interrupted by a female form.

[1] Fine-cut; that is, prim, affected.

"*Pax vobiscum!*" said the pseudo[1] friar, and was endeavoring to hurry past, when a soft voice replied, "*Et vobis*[2]—*quæso, domine reverendissime, pro misericordia vestra.*"[3]

"I am somewhat deaf," replied Cedric in good Saxon, and at the same time muttered to himself, "A curse on the fool and his *Pax vobiscum!* I have lost my javelin at the first cast."

It was, however, no unusual thing for a priest of those days to be deaf of his Latin ear, and this the person who now addressed Cedric knew full well.

"I pray you of dear love, reverend father," she replied in his own language, "that you will deign to visit with your ghostly comfort a wounded prisoner of this castle, and have such compassion upon him and us as thy holy office teaches. Never shall good deed so highly advantage thy convent."

"Daughter," answered Cedric, much embarrassed, "my time in this castle will not permit me to exercise the duties of mine office. I must presently forth. There is life and death upon my speed."

"Yet, father, let me entreat you by the vow you have taken on you," replied the suppliant, "not to leave the oppressed and endangered without counsel or succor."

"May the Fiend fly away with me, and leave me in Ifrin with the souls of Odin and of Thor!"[4] answered Cedric impatiently, and would probably have proceeded in the same tone of total departure from his spiritual character, when the colloquy was interrupted by the harsh voice of Urfried, the old crone of the turret.

"How, minion," said she to the female speaker, "is this the manner in which you requite the kindness which permitted thee to leave thy prison-cell yonder? Puttest thou the reverend man to use ungracious language to free himself from a Jewess?"

[1] Counterfeit.

[2] "And with you; that is, "Peace be with you also."

[3] "I pray, O most holy father! for thy mercy."

[4] In the Scandinavian mythology, the god of war, and the defender of the gods against the giants.

"A Jewess!" said Cedric, availing himself of the information to get clear of their interruption. — "Let me pass, woman! Stop me not, at your peril. I am fresh from my holy office, and would avoid pollution."

"Come this way, father," said the old hag. "Thou art a stranger in this castle, and canst not leave it without a guide. Come hither, for I would speak with thee. — And you, daughter of an accursed race, go to the sick man's chamber, and tend him until my return; and woe betide you if you again quit it without my permission!"

Rebecca retreated. Her importunities had prevailed upon Urfried to suffer her to quit the turret, and Urfried had employed her services where she herself would most gladly have paid them, by the bedside of the wounded Ivanhoe. With an understanding awake to their dangerous situation, and prompt to avail herself of each means of safety which occurred, Rebecca had hoped something from the presence of a man of religion, who, she learned from Urfried, had penetrated into this godless castle. She watched the return of the supposed ecclesiastic with the purpose of addressing him and interesting him in favor of the prisoners, with what imperfect success, the reader has been just acquainted.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN Urfried had with clamors and menaces driven Rebecca back to the apartment from which she had sallied, she proceeded to conduct the unwilling Cedric into a small apartment, the door of which she heedfully secured. Then, fetching from a cupboard a stoup of wine and two flagons, she placed them on the table, and said, in a tone rather asserting a fact than asking a question, "Thou art Saxon, father. Deny it not," she continued, observing that Cedric hastened not to reply. "The sounds of my native language are sweet to mine ears, though

seldom heard, save from the tongues of the wretched and degraded serfs on whom the proud Normans impose the meanest drudgery of this dwelling. Thou art a Saxon, father, — a Saxon, — and, save as thou art a servant of God, a freeman. Thine accents are sweet in mine ear."

"Do not Saxon priests visit this castle, then?" replied Cedric. "It were, methinks, their duty to comfort the outcast and oppressed children of the soil."

"They come not; or, if they come, they better love to revel at the board of their conquerors," answered Urfried, "than to hear the groans of their countrymen: so, at least, report speaks of them. Of myself, I can say little. This castle, for ten years, has opened to no priest save the Norman chaplain who partook the revels of Front-de-Bœuf, and he has been long gone to render an account of his stewardship. But thou art a Saxon, — a Saxon priest, — and I have one question to ask of thee."

"I am a Saxon," answered Cedric, "but unworthy, surely, of the name of priest. Let me begone on my way. I swear I will return, or send one of our fathers more worthy to hear your confession."

"Stay yet awhile," said Urfried. "The accents of the voice which thou hearest now will soon be choked with the cold earth, and I would not descend to it like the beast I have lived. But wine must give me strength to tell the horrors of my tale." She poured out a cup, and drank it with a frightful avidity, which seemed desirous of draining the last drop in the goblet. "Partake it, father." Cedric would have avoided pledging her in this ominous conviviality, but the sign which she made to him expressed impatience and despair. He complied with her request, and answered her challenge in a large wine-cup. She then proceeded with her story, as if appeased by his complaisance.

"I was not born," she said, "father, the wretch that thou now seest me. I was free, was happy, was honored, loved, and was beloved. The wrinkled, decrepit hag before thee was once the daughter of the noble thane of Torquilstone, before whose frown a thousand vassals trembled!"

"Thou the daughter of Torquil Wolfganger!" said Cedric, receding as he spoke. "Thou — thou — the daughter of that noble Saxon, my father's friend and companion in arms!"

"Thy father's friend!" echoed Urfried. "Then Cedric, called the Saxon, stands before me! for the noble Hereward of Rotherwood had but one son, whose name is well known among his countrymen. But if thou art Cedric of Rotherwood, why this religious dress? Hast thou, too, despaired of saving thy country, and sought refuge from oppression in the shade of the convent?"

"It matters not who I am," said Cedric. "I bid thee repent. Seek to prayer and penance, and mayest thou find acceptance! But I can not, I will not, longer abide with thee."

"Be it so," said Ulrica (for we may now lay aside her assumed name of Urfried). "Go thy way! Go thy way! If I am separated from mankind by my sufferings, — separated from those whose aid I might most justly expect, — not less will I be separated from them in my revenge. No man shall aid me, but the ears of all men shall tingle to hear of the deed which I shall dare to do. Farewell! Thy scorn has burst the last tie which seemed yet to unite me to my kind, — a thought that my woes might claim the compassion of my people."

"Ulrica," said Cedric, softened by this appeal, "wilt thou now yield to despair when repentance were thy fitter occupation?"

"Cedric," answered Ulrica, "thy words have awakened a new soul within me; and thou thyself shalt say, that, whatever was the life of Ulrica, her death well became the daughter of the noble Torquil. There is a force without, beleaguering this accursed castle. Hasten to lead them to the attack, and, when thou shalt see a red flag wave from the turret on the eastern angle of the donjon, press the Normans hard. They will then have enough to do within, and you may win the wall in spite both of bow and mangonel.[1] Begone, I pray thee! Follow thine own fate, and leave me to mine."

Cedric would have inquired further into the purpose which she

[1] A stone-throwing machine.

thus darkly announced, but the stern voice of Front-de-Bœuf was heard exclaiming, "Where tarries this loitering priest? By the scallop-shell[1] of Compostella,[2] I will make a martyr of him if he loiters here to hatch treason among my domestics!"

"What a true prophet," said Ulrica, "is an evil conscience! But heed him not. Out and to thy people! Cry your Saxon onslaught, and let them sing their war-song of Rollo,[3] if they will: vengeance shall bear a burden[4] to it."

As she thus spoke, she vanished through a private door, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf entered the apartment. Cedric, with some difficulty, compelled himself to make obeisance to the haughty baron, who returned his courtesy with a slight inclination of the head.

"Thy penitents, father, have made a long shrift.[5] It is the better for them, since it is the last they shall ever make. Hast thou prepared them for death?"

"I found them," said Cedric in such French as he could command, "expecting the worst from the moment they knew into whose power they had fallen."

"How now, Sir Friar?" replied Front-de-Bœuf. "Thy speech, methinks, smacks of a Saxon tongue."

"I was bred in the Convent of St. Withold of Burton," answered Cedric.

"Ay?" said the baron. "It had been better for thee to have

[1] Emblem of a pilgrim.

[2] The Order of Compostella was an order of Spanish knighthood, founded during the twelfth century to protect the road for pilgrims to the shrine of St. James at Compostella, Spain. After the victory of Clavijo, St. James the Elder was taken as the patron saint of Spain, and his relics were preserved at Compostella, or Santiago de Compostella, which became one of the three chief places of pilgrimage in the Romish Church, the other two being Jerusalem and Rome.

[3] A Norwegian pirate who invaded France about A.D. 900, where he settled, and established the Normans in that country.

[4] A refrain, like the refrain of a chorus.

[5] Confession.

been a Norman, and better for my purpose too; but need has no choice of messengers. That St. Withold's of Burton is a howlet's nest worth the harrying.[1] The day will soon come that the frock shall protect the Saxon as little as the mail-coat."

"God's will be done!" said Cedric in a voice tremulous with passion, which Front-de-Bœuf imputed to fear.

"I see," said he, "thou dreamest already that our men-at-arms are in thy refectory. But do me one cast[2] of thy holy office, and, come what list of others, thou shalt sleep as safe in thy cell as a snail within his shell of proof."

"Speak your commands," said Cedric with suppressed emotion.

"Follow me through this passage, then, that I may dismiss thee by the postern."

And as he strode on his way before the supposed friar, Front-de-Bœuf thus schooled him in the part which he desired he should act.

"Thou seest, Sir Friar, yon herd of Saxon swine, who have dared to environ this castle of Torquilstone. Tell them whatever thou hast a mind of the weakness of this fortalice, or aught else that can detain them before it for twenty-four hours. Meantime bear thou this scroll. But soft— Canst read, Sir Priest?"

"Not a jot I," answered Cedric, "save on my breviary; and then I know the characters, because I have the holy service by heart, praised be Our Lady and St. Withold!"

"The fitter messenger for my purpose. Carry thou this scroll to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin. Say it cometh from me, and is written by the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and that I pray him to send it to York with all the speed man and horse can make. Meanwhile tell him to doubt nothing. He shall find us whole and sound behind our battlement. Shame on it, that we should be compelled to hide thus by a pack of runagates who are wont to fly even at the flash of our pennons and the tramp of our horses! I say to thee, priest, contrive some cast of thine

[1] An owl's nest worth plundering. [2] Service.

art to keep the knaves where they are until our friends bring up their lances. My vengeance is awake, and she is a falcon that slumbers not till she has been gorged."

"By my patron saint," said Cedric with deeper energy than became his character, "and by every saint who has lived and died in England, your commands shall be obeyed! Not a Saxon shall stir from before these walls, if I have art and influence to detain them there."

"Ha!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "thou changest thy tone, Sir Priest, and speakest brief and bold, as if thy heart were in the slaughter of the Saxon herd; and yet thou art thyself of kindred to the swine!"

Cedric was no ready practicer of the art of dissimulation, and would at this moment have been much the better of a hint from Wamba's more fertile brain; but necessity, according to the ancient proverb, sharpens invention, and he muttered something under his cowl concerning the men in question being excommunicated outlaws both to Church and to kingdom.

"*Despardieux*,"[1] answered Front-de-Bœuf, "thou hast spoken the very truth. I forget that the knaves can strip a fat abbot as well as if they had been born south of yonder salt channel. Was it not he of St. Ives whom they tied to an oak-tree, and compelled to sing a mass while they were rifling his mails[2] and his wallets? No, by Our Lady! that jest was played by Gaultier of Middleton, one of our own companions-at-arms. But they were Saxons who robbed the chapel at St. Bees[3] of cup, candlestick, and chalice,[4] were they not?"

"They were godless men," answered Cedric.

"Ay, and, priest, thou art bound to revenge such sacrilege."

"I am, indeed, bound to vengeance," murmured Cedric. "St. Withold knows my heart."

Front-de-Bœuf, in the mean while, led the way to a postern,

[1] "By Heaven!"

[2] Saddle-bags.

[3] An English village in the county of Cumberland.

[4] The cup used in the Communion.

where, passing the moat on a single plank, they reached a small barbican, or exterior defense, which communicated with the open field by a well-fortified sallyport.[1]

"Begone, then! and if thou wilt do mine errand, and if thou return hither when it is done, thou shalt see Saxon flesh cheap as ever was hog's in the shambles[2] of Sheffield. And hark thee! Thou seemest to be a jolly confessor. Come hither after the onslaught, and thou shalt have as much Malvoisie[3] as would drench thy whole convent."

"Assuredly we shall meet again," answered Cedric.

"Something in hand the whilst," continued the Norman; and, as they parted at the postern door, he thrust into Cedric's reluctant hand a gold byzant, adding, "Remember, I will flay off both cowl and skin if thou failest in thy purpose."

"And full leave will I give thee to do both," answered Cedric, leaving the postern, and striding forth over the free field with a joyful step, "if, when we meet next, I deserve not better at thine hand." Turning then back towards the castle, he threw the piece of gold towards the donor, exclaiming at the same time, "False Norman, thy money perish with thee!"

Front-de-Bœuf heard the words imperfectly, but the action was suspicious. "Archers," he called to the warders on the outward battlements, "send me an arrow through yon monk's frock! — yet stay," he said, as his retainers were bending their bows, "it avails not: we must thus far trust him, since we have no better shift. I think he dares not betray me. At the worst, I can but treat with these Saxon dogs whom I have safe in kennel. — Ho! Giles jailer, let them bring Cedric of Rotherwood before me, and the other churl, his companion, — him, I mean, of Coningsburgh, — Athelstane there, or what call they him? Their very names are an incumbrance to a Norman knight's mouth, and have, as it were, a flavor of bacon. Give me a stoup of wine, as jolly Prince

[1] A gate.

[2] Stalls where meat was sold.

[3] Malmsey, wine, especially Canary and Madeira.

John said, that I may wash away the relish. Place it in the armory, and thither lead the prisoners."

His commands were obeyed; and, upon entering that Gothic[1] apartment, hung with many spoils won by his own valor and that of his father, he found a flagon of wine on the massive oaken table, and the two Saxon captives under the guard of four of his dependants. Front-de-Bœuf took a long draught of wine, and then addressed his prisoners; for the manner in which Wamba drew the cap over his face, the change of dress, the gloomy and broken light, and the baron's imperfect acquaintance with the features of Cedric (who avoided his Norman neighbors, and seldom stirred beyond his own domains), prevented him from discovering that the most important of his captives had made his escape.

"Gallants of England," said Front-de-Bœuf, "how relish ye your entertainment at Torquilstone? Are ye yet aware what your *surquedy* and *outrecuidance*[2] merit for scoffing at the entertainment of a prince of the House of Anjou? Have ye forgotten how ye requited the unmerited hospitality of the royal John? By God and St. Dennis, an ye pay not the richer ransom, I will hang ye up by the feet from the iron bars of these windows till the kites and hooded crows have made skeletons of you! Speak out, ye Saxon dogs! What bid ye for your worthless lives? — How say you, you of Rotherwood?"

"Not a doit[3] I," answered poor Wamba; "and for hanging up by the feet, my brain has been topsy-turvy, they say, ever since the biggin[4] was bound first round my head, so turning me upside down may, peradventure, restore it again."

"St. Genevieve!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "what have we got here?"

And with the back of his hand he struck Cedric's cap from the

[1] In the Gothic style of architecture, pointed arches, etc.

[2] Insolence and presumption.

[3] A Dutch coin of the value of about one fourth of a cent.

[4] A cap or hood for a child.

head of the Jester, and, throwing open his collar, discovered the fatal badge of servitude,— the silver collar round his neck.

"Giles — Clement — dogs and varlets!" exclaimed the furious Norman, "what have you brought me here?"

"I think I can tell you," said De Bracy, who just entered the apartment. "This is Cedric's clown, who fought so manful a skirmish with Isaac of York about a question of precedence."

"I shall settle it for them both," replied Front-de-Bœuf: "they shall hang on the same gallows, unless his master and this boar of Coningsburgh will pay well for their lives. Their wealth is the least they can surrender; they must also carry off with them the swarms that are besetting the castle, subscribe a surrender of their pretended immunities, and live under us as serfs and vassals; too happy if, in the new world that is about to begin, we leave them the breath of their nostrils. — Go," said he to two of his attendants, "fetch me the right Cedric hither, and I pardon your error for once, the rather that you but mistook a fool for a Saxon franklin."

"Ay, but," said Wamba, "your chivalrous Excellency will find there are more fools than franklins among us."

"What means the knave?" said Front-de-Bœuf, looking towards his followers, who, lingering and loath, faltered forth their belief, that, if this were not Cedric who was there in presence, they knew not what was become of him.

"Saints of Heaven!" exclaimed De Bracy, "he must have escaped in the monk's garments!"

"Fiends!" echoed Front-de-Bœuf: "it was, then, the boar of Rotherwood whom I ushered to the postern and dismissed with my own hands! — And thou," he said to Wamba, "whose folly could overreach the wisdom of idiots yet more gross than thyself, I will give thee holy orders. I will shave thy crown for thee! — Here, let them tear the scalp from his head, and then pitch him headlong from the battlements. — Thy trade is to jest. Canst thou jest now?"

"You deal with me better than your word, noble knight,"

whimpered forth poor Wamba, whose habits of buffoonery were not to be overcome even by the immediate prospect of death. "If you give me the red cap you propose, out of a simple monk you will make a cardinal."

"The poor wretch," said De Bracy, "is resolved to die in his vocation. — Front-de-Bœuf, you shall not slay him. Give him to me to make sport for my Free Companions. — How sayest thou, knave? Wilt thou take heart of grace, and go to the wars with me?"

"Ay, with my master's leave," said Wamba, "for, look you, I must not slip collar," and he touched that which he wore, "without his permission."

"Oh, a Norman saw will soon cut a Saxon collar," said De Bracy.

"Ay, noble sir," said Wamba, "and thence goes the proverb, —

> "'Norman saw on English oak,
> On English neck a Norman yoke;
> Norman spoon in English dish,
> And England ruled as Normans wish;
> Blithe world in England never will be more,
> Till England's rid of all the four.'"

"Thou dost well, De Bracy," said Front-de-Bœuf, "to stand there listening to a fool's jargon when destruction is gaping for us! Seest thou not we are overreached, and that our proposed mode of communicating with our friends without has been disconcerted by this same motley gentleman thou art so fond to brother? What views have we to expect but instant storm?"

"To the battlements, then," said De Bracy. "When didst thou ever see me the graver for the thoughts of battle? — Call the Templar yonder, and let him fight but half as well for his life as he has done for his order. Make thou to the walls thyself with thy huge body. Let me do my poor endeavor in my own way, and I tell thee the Saxon outlaws may as well attempt to scale the clouds as the castle of Torquilstone; or, if you will treat with

the banditti, why not employ the mediation of this worthy franklin? — Here, Saxon," he continued, addressing Athelstane, and handing the cup to him, "rouse up thy soul to say what thou wilt do for thy liberty."

"What a man of mold[1] may," answered Athelstane, "providing it be what a man of manhood ought. Dismiss me free, with my companions, and I will pay a ransom of a thousand marks."

"And wilt, moreover, assure us the retreat of that scum of mankind who are swarming around the castle, contrary to God's peace and the King's?" said Front-de-Bœuf.

"In so far as I can," answered Athelstane, "I will withdraw them; and I fear not but that my father Cedric will do his best to assist me."

"We are agreed, then," said Front-de-Bœuf, "thou and they are to be set at freedom, and peace is to be on both sides, for payment of a thousand marks. It is a trifling ransom, Saxon, and thou wilt owe gratitude to the moderation which accepts of it in exchange of your persons. But mark, this extends not to the Jew Isaac."

"Nor to the Jew Isaac's daughter," said the Templar, who had now joined them.

"Neither," said Front-de-Bœuf, "belongs to this Saxon's company."

"I were unworthy to be called Christian if they did," replied Athelstane. "Deal with the unbelievers as ye list."

"Neither does the ransom include the Lady Rowena," said De Bracy. "It shall never be said I was scared out of a fair prize without striking a blow for it."

"Neither," said Front-de-Bœuf, "does our treaty refer to this wretched Jester, whom I retain, that I may make him an example to every knave who turns jest into earnest."

"The Lady Rowena," answered Athelstane with the most steady countenance, "is my affianced bride. I will be drawn[2]

[1] Athelstane's meaning is, what a brave man thinks consistent with his manhood.

[2] Torn apart.

by wild horses before I consent to part with her. The slave Wamba has this day saved the life of my father Cedric: I will lose mine ere a hair of his head be injured."

"Thy affianced bride! — the Lady Rowena the affianced bride of a vassal like thee?" said De Bracy. "Saxon, thou dreamest that the days of thy seven kingdoms[1] are returned again. I tell thee, the princes of the House of Anjou confer not their wards on men of such lineage as thine."

"My lineage, proud Norman," replied Athelstane, "is drawn from a source more pure and ancient than that of a beggarly Frenchman whose living is won by selling the blood of the thieves whom he assembles under his paltry standard. Kings were my ancestors, strong in war, and wise in council, who every day feasted in their hall more hundreds than thou canst number individual followers; whose names have been sung by minstrels, and their laws recorded by Witenagemots;[2] whose bones were interred amid the prayers of saints, and over whose tombs minsters[3] have been builded."

"Thou hast it, De Bracy," said Front-de-Bœuf, well pleased with the rebuff which his companion had received. "The Saxon hath hit thee fairly."

"As fairly as a captive can strike," said De Bracy with apparent carelessness; "for he whose hands are tied should have his tongue at freedom. — But the glibness of reply, comrade," rejoined he, speaking to Athelstane, "will not win the freedom of the Lady Rowena."

To this, Athelstane, who had already made a longer speech than was his custom, returned no answer. The conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a menial, who announced that a monk demanded admittance at the postern gate.

"In the name of St. Bennet, the prince of these bull-beggars," said Front-de-Bœuf, "have we a real monk this time, or another

[1] The Heptarchy (see Note 4, p. 23).

[2] The national council of the Saxons, the council of the wise men.

[3] Cathedrals.

impostor?—Search him, slaves, for an ye suffer a second impostor to be palmed upon you, I will have your eyes torn out, and hot coals put into the sockets."

"Let me endure the extremity of your anger, my lord," said Giles, "if this be not a real shaveling. Your squire Jocelyn knows him well, and will vouch him to be Brother Ambrose, a monk in attendance upon the Prior of Jorvaulx."

"Admit him," said Front-de-Bœuf. "Most likely he brings us news from his jovial master. Surely the priests are relieved from duty, that they are strolling thus wildly through the country. Remove these prisoners; and, Saxon, think on what thou hast heard."

"I claim," said Athelstane, "an honorable imprisonment, with due care of my board and of my couch, as becomes my rank, and as is due to one who is in treaty for ransom. Moreover, I hold him that deems himself the best of you bound to answer to me with his body for this aggression on my freedom. This defiance hath already been sent to thee by the sewer: thou underliest it, and art bound to answer me. There lies my glove."[1]

"I answer not the challenge of my prisoner," said Front-de-Bœuf; "nor shalt thou, Maurice de Bracy.—Giles," he continued, "hang the franklin's glove upon the tine[2] of yonder branched antlers. There shall it remain until he is a free man. Should he then presume to demand it, or to affirm he was unlawfully made my prisoner, by the belt of St. Christopher,[3] he will speak to one who hath never refused to meet a foe on foot or on horseback, alone or with his vassals at his back!"

The Saxon prisoners were accordingly removed just as they

[1] The customary form of delivering a challenge. [2] Prong.

[3] A native of Lycia, of gigantic stature and strength, who, according to tradition, one night bore Christ in the form of a child across the stream over which he acted as a kind of ferryman. His burden grew at every step, and when he reached the opposite bank the child had grown to a man. Upon asking whom he carried, he was told that he had borne the Saviour, and had had the weight of the sins of the world on his back.

introduced the monk Ambrose, who appeared to be in great perturbation.

"This is the real *Deus vobiscum*,"[1] said Wamba, as he passed the reverend brother: "the others were but counterfeits."

"Holy Mother!" said the monk, as he addressed the assembled knights, "I am at last safe and in Christian keeping."

"Safe thou art," replied De Bracy: "and for Christianity, here is the stout Baron Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, whose utter abomination is a Jew; and the good Knight Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose trade is to slay Saracens."

"Ye are friends and allies of our reverend father in God, Aymer, Prior of Jorvaulx," said the monk, without noticing the tone of De Bracy's reply. "Ye owe him aid both by knightly faith and holy charity, for what sayeth the blessed St. Augustin,[2] in his treatise *De Civitate Dei*"[3] —

"What," interrupted Front-de-Bœuf, "dost thou say, Sir Priest? We have little time to hear texts from the holy fathers."

"*Sancta Maria!*" ejaculated father Ambrose, "how prompt to ire are these unhallowed laymen! — But be it known to you, brave knights, that certain murderous caitiffs,[4] casting behind them fear of God and reverence of his Church, and not regarding the bull of the holy see,[5] *Si quis, suadente Diabolo*"[6] —

"Brother priest," said the Templar, "all this we know or guess at. Tell us plainly, is thy master, the prior, made prisoner, and to whom?"

"Surely," said Ambrose, "he is in the hands of the men of Belial,[7] infesters of these woods, and contemners of the holy text, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets naught of evil.'"

[1] "God be with ye!" here, of course, meaning the monk.

[2] Born Nov. 13, 354, at Tagaste, Numidia; Bishop of Hippo in northern Africa thirty-five years. The religious order of the Augustinians took their name from him.

[3] "On the City of God." This was the title of his work.

[4] Knaves, in the sense of low fellows.

[5] A decree or edict of the Pope.

[6] "If any one urged by the Devil."

[7] The Evil One.

"Here is a new argument for our swords, sirs," said Front-de-Bœuf, turning to his companions; "and so, instead of reaching us any assistance, the Prior of Jorvaulx requests aid at our hands? A man is well helped of these churchmen when he hath most to do! — But speak out, priest, and say at once, what doth thy master expect from us?"

"So please you," said Ambrose, "violent hands having been imposed on my reverend superior, contrary to the holy ordinance which I did already quote, and the men of Belial having rifled his mails and budgets, and stripped him of two hundred marks of pure refined gold, they do yet demand of him a large sum besides, ere they will suffer him to depart from their hands. Wherefore, the reverend father in God prays you, as his dear friends, to rescue him, either by paying down the ransom at which they hold him, or by force of arms, at your best discretion."

"The foul fiend quell the prior!" said Front-de-Bœuf. "His morning draught has been a deep one. When did thy master hear of a Norman baron unbuckling his purse to relieve a churchman, whose bags are ten times as weighty as ours? And how can we do aught by valor to free him, that are cooped up here by ten times our number, and expect an assault every moment?"

"And that was what I was about to tell you," said the monk, "had your hastiness allowed me time. But, God help me, I am old, and these foul onslaughts distract an aged man's brain. Nevertheless, it is of verity that they assemble a camp, and raise a bank against the walls of this castle."

"To the battlements!" cried De Bracy, "and let us mark what these knaves do without;" and so saying, he opened a latticed window which led to a sort of bartisan, or projecting balcony, and immediately called from thence to those in the apartment. "St. Denis, but the old monk hath brought true tidings! They bring forward mantelets and pavisses,[1] and the archers muster on the skirts of the wood like a dark cloud before a hail-storm."

[1] Mantelets were temporary and movable defenses formed of planks, under cover of which assailants advanced to the attack of fortified places of old.

Reginald Front-de-Bœuf also looked out upon the field, and immediately snatched his bugle, and, after winding a long and loud blast, commanded his men to their posts on the walls.

"De Bracy, look to the eastern side, where the walls are lowest. — Noble Bois-Guilbert, thy trade hath well taught thee how to attack and defend, look thou to the western side. — I myself will take post at the barbican. Yet do not confine your exertions to any one spot, noble friends! We must this day be everywhere, and multiply ourselves, were it possible, so as to carry by our presence succor and relief wherever the attack is hottest. Our numbers are few, but activity and courage may supply that defect, since we have only to do with rascal clowns."

"But, noble knights," exclaimed Father Ambrose, amidst the bustle and confusion occasioned by the preparations for defense, "will none of ye hear the message of the reverend father in God, Aymer, Prior of Jorvaulx? — I beseech thee to hear me, noble Sir Reginald!"

"Go patter thy petitions to Heaven!" said the fierce Norman, "for we on earth have no time to listen to them. — Ho! there, Anselm! see that seething pitch and oil are ready to pour on the heads of these audacious traitors. Look that the crossbow-men lack not bolts. Fling abroad my banner with the old bull's head![1] The knaves shall soon find with whom they have to do this day!"

"But, noble sir," continued the monk, persevering in his endeavors to draw attention, "consider my vows of obedience, and let me discharge myself of my superior's errand."

"Away with this prating dotard," said Front-de-Bœuf. "Lock him up in the chapel, to tell his beads till the broil be over. It will be a new thing to the saints in Torquilstone to hear *aves* and *paters*. They have not been so honored, I trow,[2] since they were cut out of stone."

Pavisses were a species of large shields covering the whole person, employed on the same occasions.

[1] Front-de-Bœuf signifies the front or head of an ox or bull: hence the emblem on his banner.

[2] Think; believe.

"Blaspheme not the holy saints, Sir Reginald," said De Bracy: "we shall have need of their aid to-day before yon rascal rout disband."

"I expect little aid from their hand," said Front-de-Bœuf, "unless we were to hurl them from the battlements on the heads of the villains. There is a huge lumbering St. Christopher[1] yonder, sufficient to bear a whole company to the earth."

The Templar had in the mean time been looking out on the proceedings of the besiegers with rather more attention than the brutal Front-de-Bœuf or his giddy companion.

"By the faith of mine order," he said, "these men approach with more touch of discipline than could have been judged. See ye how dexterously they avail themselves of every cover which a tree or bush affords, and shun exposing themselves to the shot of our crossbows? I spy neither banner nor pennon among them, and yet will I gage my golden chain that they are led on by some noble knight or gentleman skillful in the practice of wars."

"I espy him," said De Bracy. "I see the waving of a knight's crest, and the gleam of his armor. See yon tall man in the black mail, who is busied marshaling the farther troop of the *rascaille*[2] yeomen. By St. Denis, I hold him to be the same whom we called *Le Noir Faineant*, who overthrew thee, Front-de-Bœuf, in the lists at Ashby."

"So much the better," said Front-de-Bœuf, "that he comes here to give me my revenge. Some hiding fellow he must be, who dared not stay to assert his claim to the tourney prize which chance had assigned him. I should in vain have sought for him where knights and nobles seek their foes, and right glad am I he hath here shown himself among yon villain yeomanry."

The demonstrations of the enemy's immediate approach cut off all further discourse. Each knight repaired to his post, and at the head of a few followers whom they were able to muster, and who were in numbers inadequate to defend the whole extent of the walls, they awaited with calm determination the threatened assault.

[1] See Note 3, p. 261.

[2] Vulgar; common.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OUR history must needs retrograde for the space of a few pages, to inform the reader of certain passages material to his understanding the rest of this important narrative. His own intelligence may indeed have easily anticipated, that when Ivanhoe sunk down, and seemed abandoned by all the world, it was the importunity of Rebecca which prevailed on her father to have the gallant young warrior transported from the lists to the house which for the time the Jews inhabited in the suburbs of Ashby.

It would not have been difficult to have persuaded Isaac to this step in any other circumstances, for his disposition was kind and grateful; but he had also the prejudices and scrupulous timidity of his persecuted people, and those were to be conquered.

"Holy Abraham!" he exclaimed, "he is a good youth, and my heart bleeds to see the gore trickle down his rich embroidered hacqueton[1] and his corselet of goodly price — but to carry him to our house! — Damsel, hast thou well considered? He is a Christian, and by our law we may not deal with the stranger and Gentile, save for the advantage of our commerce."

"Speak not so, my dear father," replied Rebecca. "We may not indeed mix with them in banquet and in jollity; but in wounds and in misery the Gentile becometh the Jew's brother."

"I would I knew what the rabbi Jacob Ben Tudela would opine on it," replied Isaac; "nevertheless, the good youth must not bleed to death. Let Seth and Reuben bear him to Ashby."

"Nay, let them place him in my litter," said Rebecca. "I will mount one of the palfreys."

But Isaac, seizing the sleeve of her mantle, again exclaimed in a hurried voice, "Beard of Aaron![2] what if the youth perish!

[1] Or *acton*, a padded jacket worn beneath armor.

[2] The first high-priest of the Jews; son of Amram of the tribe of Levi. He was three years older than his brother Moses.

If he die in our custody, shall we not be held guilty of his blood, and be torn to pieces by the multitude?"

"He will not die, my father," said Rebecca, gently extricating herself from the grasp of Isaac—"he will not die unless we abandon him; and if so, we are indeed answerable for his blood to God and to man."

"Nay," said Isaac, releasing his hold, "it grieveth me as much to see the drops of his blood as if they were so many golden byzants from mine own purse; and I well know that the lessons of Miriam, daughter of the rabbi Manasses of Byzantium, whose soul is in Paradise, have made thee skillful in the art of healing, and that thou knowest the craft of herbs and the force of elixirs. Therefore do as thy mind giveth thee. Thou art a good damsel, a blessing and a crown, and a song of rejoicing unto me and to my house, and unto the people of my fathers."

Rebecca lost no time in causing the patient to be transported to their temporary dwelling, and proceeded with her own hands to examine and to bind up his wounds.

The Jews, both male and female, possessed and practiced the medical science in all its branches; and the monarchs and powerful barons of the time frequently committed themselves to the charge of some experienced sage among this despised people, when wounded or in sickness.

The beautiful Rebecca had been heedfully brought up in all the knowledge proper to her nation, which her apt and powerful mind had retained, arranged, and enlarged, in the course of a progress beyond her years, her sex, and even the age in which she lived. Her knowledge of medicine and of the healing art had been acquired under an aged Jewess, the daughter of one of their most celebrated doctors, who loved Rebecca as her own child, and was believed to have communicated to her secrets which had been left to herself by her sage father at the same time and under the same circumstances. The fate of Miriam had indeed been to fall a sacrifice to the fanaticisms of the times; but her secrets had survived in her apt pupil.

When Ivanhoe reached the habitation of Isaac, he was still in a state of unconsciousness, owing to the profuse loss of blood which had taken place during his exertions in the lists. Rebecca examined the wound, applied to it such vulnerary [1] remedies as her art prescribed, and informed her father, that, if the healing balsam of Miriam retained its virtue, there was nothing to fear for his guest's life, and that he might with safety travel to York with them on the ensuing day.

It was not until evening was nearly closed that Ivanhoe was restored to consciousness of his situation. He awoke from a broken slumber under the confused impressions which are naturally attendant on the recovery from a state of insensibility. He was unable for some time to recall exactly to memory the circumstances which had preceded his fall in the lists, or to make out any connected chain of the events in which he had been engaged upon the yesterday. A sense of wounds and injury, joined to great weakness and exhaustion, was mingled with the recollection of blows dealt and received, of steeds rushing upon each other, overthrowing and overthrown, — of shouts and clashing of arms, and all the heady tumult of a confused fight. An effort to draw aside the curtain of his couch was in some degree successful, although rendered difficult by the pain of his wound.

To his great surprise, he found himself in a room magnificently furnished, but having cushions instead of chairs to rest upon, and in other respects partaking so much of Oriental costume that he began to doubt whether he had not, during his sleep, been transported back again to the land of Palestine. The impression was increased, when, the tapestry being drawn aside, a female form, dressed in a rich habit, which partook more of the Eastern taste than that of Europe, glided through the door which it concealed, and was followed by a swarthy domestic.

Rebecca's few and brief directions were given in the Hebrew language to the old domestic; and he, who had been frequently her assistant in similar cases, obeyed them without reply.

[1] Adapted to effect a cure.

Ivanhoe suffered them in silence to take the measures they thought most proper for his recovery; and it was not until these were completed, and his kind physician about to retire, that his curiosity could no longer be suppressed. "Gentle maiden," he began in the Arabian tongue, with which his Eastern travels had rendered him familiar, and which he thought most likely to be understood by the turbaned and caftaned[1] damsel who stood before him—"I pray you, gentle maiden, of your courtesy"—

But here he was interrupted by his fair physician; a smile, which she could scarce suppress, dimpling for an instant a face whose general expression was that of contemplative melancholy. "I am of England, Sir Knight, and speak the English tongue, although my dress and my lineage belong to another climate."

"Noble damsel," again the Knight of Ivanhoe began; and again Rebecca hastened to interrupt him.

"Bestow not on me, Sir Knight," she said, "the epithet of noble. It is well you should speedily know that your handmaiden is a poor Jewess, the daughter of that Isaac of York to whom you were so lately a good and kind lord. It well becomes him and those of his household to render to you such careful tendance as your present state necessarily demands."

She then informed him of the necessity they were under of removing to York, and of her father's resolution to transport him thither, and tend him in his own house until his health should be restored. Ivanhoe expressed great repugnance to this plan, which he grounded on unwillingness to give further trouble to his benefactors.

"Was there not," he said, "in Ashby, or near it, some Saxon franklin, or even some wealthy peasant, who would endure the burden of a wounded countryman's residence with him until he should be again able to bear his armor? Was there no convent of Saxon endowment where he could be received? Or could he not be transported as far as Burton, where he was sure to find

[1] Wearing a caftan, or a kind of long gown having sleeves extending below the hands, worn in the East.

hospitality with Waltheoff the abbot of St. Withold's, to whom he was related?"

"Any, the worst of these harborages," said Rebecca with a melancholy smile, "would unquestionably be more fitting for your residence than the abode of a despised Jew; yet, Sir Knight, unless you would dismiss your physician, you cannot change your lodging. Our nation, as you well know, can cure wounds, though we deal not in inflicting them; and in our family, in particular, are secrets which have been handed down since the days of Solomon, and of which you have already experienced the advantages. No Nazarene — I crave your forgiveness, Sir Knight — no Christian leech within the four seas of Britain could enable you to bear your corselet within a month."

"And how soon wilt *thou* enable me to brook it?" said Ivanhoe impatiently.

"Within eight days, if thou wilt be patient and conformable to my directions," replied Rebecca.

"By our Blessed Lady," said Wilfred, "if it be not a sin to name her here, it is no time for me or any true knight to be bedridden; and if thou accomplish thy promise, maiden, I will pay thee with my casque full of crowns, come by them as I may."

"I will accomplish my promise," said Rebecca, "and thou shalt bear thine armor on the eighth day from hence, if thou wilt grant me but one boon in the stead of the silver thou dost promise me."

"If it be within my power, and such as a true Christian knight may yield to one of thy people," replied Ivanhoe, "I will grant thy boon blithely and thankfully."

"Nay," answered Rebecca, "I will but pray of thee to believe henceforward that a Jew may do good service to a Christian without desiring other guerdon than the blessing of the great Father who made both Jew and Gentile."

"It were sin to doubt it, maiden," replied Ivanhoe; "and I repose myself on thy skill without further scruple or question, well trusting you will enable me to bear my corselet on the eighth

day. And now, my kind leech, let me inquire of the news abroad. What of the noble Saxon Cedric and his household? What of the lovely lady"— He stopped, as if unwilling to speak Rowena's name in the house of a Jew. "Of her, I mean, who was named the queen of the tournament."

"And who was selected by you, Sir Knight, to hold that dignity, with judgment which was admired as much as your valor," replied Rebecca.

The blood which Ivanhoe had lost did not prevent a flush from crossing his cheek, feeling that he had incautiously betrayed his deep interest in Rowena by the awkward attempt he had made to conceal it.

"It was less of her I would speak," said he, "than of Prince John; and I would fain know somewhat of a faithful squire, and why he now attends me not."

"Let me use my authority as a leech," answered Rebecca, "and enjoin you to keep silence, and avoid agitating reflections, whilst I apprise you of what you desire to know. Prince John hath broken off the tournament, and set forward in all haste towards York, with the nobles, knights, and churchmen of his party, after collecting such sums as they could wring, by fair means or foul, from those who are esteemed the wealthy of the land. It is said he designs to assume his brother's crown."

"Not without a blow struck in his defense," said Ivanhoe, raising himself upon the couch, "if there were but one true subject in England. I will fight for Richard's title with the best of them—ay, one to two in a just quarrel!"

"But that you may be able to do so," said Rebecca, touching his shoulder with her hand, "you must now observe my directions and remain quiet."

"True, maiden," said Ivanhoe, "as quiet as these disquieted times will permit. And of Cedric and his household?"

"His steward came but brief while since," said the Jewess, "panting with haste, to ask my father for certain moneys, the price of wool the growth of Cedric's flocks, and from him I

learned that Cedric and Athelstane of Coningsburgh had left Prince John's lodging in high displeasure, and were about to set forth on their return homeward."

"Went any lady with them to the banquet?" said Wilfred.

"The Lady Rowena," said Rebecca, answering the question with more precision than it had been asked — "the Lady Rowena went not to the prince's feast, and, as the steward reported to us, she is now on her journey back to Rotherwood with her guardian Cedric. And touching your faithful squire Gurth" —

"Ha!" exclaimed the knight, "knowest thou his name? But thou dost," he immediately added, "and well thou mayest, for it was from thy hand, and, as I am now convinced, from thine own generosity of spirit, that he received but yesterday a hundred zecchins."

"Speak not of that," said Rebecca, blushing deeply: "I see how easy it is for the tongue to betray what the heart would gladly conceal."

"But this sum of gold," said Ivanhoe gravely: "my honor is concerned in repaying it to your father."

"Let it be as thou wilt," said Rebecca, "when eight days have passed away; but think not and speak not now of aught that may retard thy recovery."

"Be it so, kind maiden," said Ivanhoe. "It were most ungrateful to dispute thy commands. But one word of the fate of poor Gurth, and I have done with questioning thee."

"I grieve to tell thee, Sir Knight," answered the Jewess, "that he is in custody by the order of Cedric." And then, observing the distress which her communication gave to Wilfred, she instantly added, "But the steward Oswald said that if nothing occurred to renew his master's displeasure against him, he was sure that Cedric would pardon Gurth, a faithful serf, and one who stood high in favor, and who had but committed this error out of the love that he bore to Cedric's son. And he said, moreover, that he and his comrades, and especially Wamba the Jester, were

resolved to warn Gurth to make his escape by the way, in case Cedric's ire against him could not be mitigated."

"Would they may keep their purpose!" said Ivanhoe; "but it seems as if I were destined to bring ruin on whomsoever hath shown kindness to me. My King, by whom I was honored and distinguished, thou seest that the brother most indebted to him is raising his arms to grasp his crown; my regard hath brought restraint and trouble on the fairest of her sex; and now my father in his mood may slay this poor bondsman, but for his love and loyal service to me. Thou seest, maiden, what an ill-fated wretch thou dost labor to assist: be wise, and let me go, ere the misfortunes which track my footsteps like slothounds shall involve thee also in their pursuit."

"Nay," said Rebecca, "thy weakness and thy grief, Sir Knight, make thee miscalculate the purposes of Heaven. Thou hast been restored to thy country when it most needed the assistance of a strong hand and a true heart, and thou hast humbled the pride of thine enemies and those of thy King, when their horn was most highly exalted; and for the evil which thou sustained, seest thou not that Heaven hath raised thee a helper and a physician even among the most despised of the land? Therefore be of good courage, and trust that thou art preserved for some marvel which thine arm shall work before this people. Adieu! and having taken the medicine which I shall send thee by the hand of Reuben, compose thyself again to rest, that thou mayest be the more able to endure the journey on the succeeding day."

Ivanhoe was convinced by the reasoning, and obeyed the directions, of Rebecca. The draught which Reuben administered was of a sedative and narcotic quality, and secured the patient sound and undisturbed slumbers. In the morning his kind physician found him entirely free from feverish symptoms, and fit to undergo the fatigue of a journey.

He was deposited in the horse-litter which had brought him from the lists, and every precaution taken for his traveling with ease. In one circumstance only, even the entreaties of Rebecca

were unable to secure sufficient attention to the accommodation of the wounded knight. Isaac, like the enriched traveler of Juvenal's[1] tenth satire, had ever the fear of robbery before his eyes, conscious that he would be alike accounted fair game by the marauding Norman noble and by the Saxon outlaw. He therefore journeyed at a great rate, and made short halts and shorter repasts, so that he passed by Cedric and Athelstane, who had several hours the start of him, but who had been delayed by their protracted feasting at the Convent of St. Withold's. Yet such was the virtue of Miriam's balsam, or such the strength of Ivanhoe's constitution, that he did not sustain from the hurried journey that inconvenience which his kind physician had apprehended.

In another point of view, however, the Jew's haste proved somewhat more than good speed. The rapidity with which he insisted on traveling bred several disputes between him and the party whom he had hired to attend him as a guard. These men were Saxons, and not free by any means from the national love of ease and good living which the Normans stigmatized as laziness and gluttony. Reversing Shylock's position, they had accepted the employment in hopes of feeding upon the wealthy Jew, and were very much displeased when they found themselves disappointed by the rapidity with which he insisted on their proceeding. They remonstrated also upon the risk of damage to their horses by these forced marches. Finally there arose betwixt Isaac and his satellites a deadly feud concerning the quantity of wine and ale to be allowed for consumption at each meal; and thus it happened, that when the alarm of danger approached, and that which Isaac feared was likely to come upon him, he

[1] A Latin satirist, born, it is thought, at Aquinam, a town of the Volsci, A.D. 40; died in Egypt A.D. 125. The allusion to the enriched traveler is to the passage in the satire which says in substance that though carrying a few vessels of silver, if you go by night you tremble at the shadow of every reed in the moonlight, while the traveler with empty pockets sings in the robber's face.

was deserted by the discontented mercenaries on whose protection he had relied, without using the means necessary to secure their attachment.

In this deplorable condition, the Jew, with his daughter and her wounded patient, were found by Cedric, as has already been noticed, and soon afterward fell into the power of De Bracy and his confederates. Little notice was at first taken of the horse-litter, and it might have remained behind but for the curiosity of De Bracy, who looked into it under the impression that it might contain the object of his enterprise, for Rowena had not unveiled herself. But De Bracy's astonishment was considerable when he discovered that the litter contained a wounded man, who, conceiving himself to have fallen into the power of Saxon outlaws with whom his name might be a protection for himself and his friends, frankly avowed himself to be Wilfred of Ivanhoe. The ideas of chivalrous honor, which, amidst his wildness and levity, never utterly abandoned De Bracy, prohibited him from doing the knight any injury in his defenseless condition, and equally interdicted his betraying him to Front-de-Bœuf, who would have had no scruples to put to death, under any circumstances, the rival claimant of the fief of Ivanhoe. On the other hand, to liberate a suitor preferred by the Lady Rowena was a pitch far above the flight of De Bracy's generosity. A middle course betwixt good and evil was all which he found himself capable of adopting, and he commanded two of his own squires to keep close by the litter, and to suffer no one to approach it. If questioned, they were directed by their master to say that the empty litter of the Lady Rowena was employed to transport one of their comrades who had been wounded in the scuffle. On arriving at Torquilstone, De Bracy's squires conveyed Ivanhoe, still under the name of a wounded comrade, to a distant apartment. This explanation was accordingly returned by these men to Front-de-Bœuf, when he questioned them why they did not make for the battlements upon the alarm.

"A wounded companion!" he replied in great wrath and

astonishment. "No wonder that churls and yeomen wax so presumptuous as even to lay leaguer[1] before castles, and that clowns and swineherds send defiances to nobles, since men-at-arms have turned sick men's nurses, and Free Companions are grown keepers of dying folk's curtains, when the castle is about to be assailed. To the battlements, ye loitering villains!" he exclaimed, raising his stentorian voice till the arches around rung again; "to the battlements, or I will splinter your bones with this truncheon!"

The men sulkily replied that they desired nothing better than to go to the battlements, providing Front-de-Bœuf would bear them out with their master, who had commanded them to tend the dying man.

"The dying man, knaves!" rejoined the baron. "I promise thee we shall all be dying men an we stand not to it the more stoutly. But I will relieve the guard upon this caitiff companion of yours. — Here, Urfried — Saxon witch — hearest me not? — tend me this bedridden fellow, since he must needs be tended, whilst these knaves use their weapons. Here be two arblasts, comrades, with windlaces and quarrells.[2] To the barbican with you, and see you drive each bolt through a Saxon brain!"

The men, who, like most of their description, were fond of enterprise, and detested inaction, went joyfully to the scene of danger as they were commanded, and thus the charge of Ivanhoe was transferred to Urfried, or Ulrica. But she, whose brain was burning with remembrance of injuries and with hopes of vengeance, was readily induced to devolve upon Rebecca the care of her patient.

[1] Besiege.

[2] The arblast was a crossbow; the windlace, the machine used in bending that weapon; and the quarrell, so called from its square or diamond-shaped head, was the bolt adapted to it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN finding herself once more by the side of Ivanhoe, Rebecca was astonished at the pleasure which she experienced, even at a time when all around them both was danger, if not despair. As she inquired after his health, there was a softness in her accents, implying a kinder interest than she would herself have been pleased to have voluntarily expressed.

"My mind, gentle maiden," said Ivanhoe, "is more disturbed by anxiety than my body with pain. From the speeches of these men who were my warders just now, I learn that I am a prisoner, and, if I judge aright of the loud, hoarse voice which even now dispatched them hence on some military duty, I am in the castle of Front-de-Bœuf. If so, how will this end, or how can I protect Rowena and my father?"

She hastened to give Ivanhoe what information she could; but it amounted only to this, that the Templar Bois-Guilbert and the baron Front-de-Bœuf were commanders within the castle; that it was beleaguered from without, but by whom she knew not. She added that there was a Christian priest within the castle who might be possessed of more information.

"A Christian priest!" said the knight joyfully. "Fetch him hither, Rebecca, if thou canst. Say a sick man desires his ghostly counsel. Say what thou wilt, but bring him. Something I must do or attempt, but how can I determine until I know how matters stand without?"

Rebecca, in compliance with the wishes of Ivanhoe, made that attempt to bring Cedric into the wounded knight's chamber which was defeated, as we have already seen, by the interference of Urfried, who had been also on the watch to intercept the supposed monk. Rebecca retired to communicate to Ivanhoe the result of her errand.

They had not much leisure to regret the failure of this source

of intelligence, or to contrive by what means it might be supplied; for the noise within the castle, occasioned by the defensive preparations, which had been considerable for some time, now increased into tenfold bustle and clamor. The heavy yet hasty step of the men-at-arms traversed the battlements, or resounded on the narrow and winding passages and stairs which led to the various bartisans and points of defense. The voices of the knights were heard animating their followers, or directing means of defense, while their commands were often drowned in the clashing of armor or the clamorous shouts of those whom they addressed. Tremendous as these sounds were, and yet more terrible from the awful event which they presaged, there was a sublimity mixed with them which Rebecca's high-toned mind could feel even in that moment of terror. Her eye kindled, although the blood fled from her cheeks; and there was a strong mixture of fear and of a thrilling sense of the sublime, as she repeated, half whispering to herself, half speaking to her companion, the sacred text, "The quiver rattleth, . . . the glittering spear and the shield, . . . the thunder of the captains, and the shouting!"

But Ivanhoe was like the war-horse of that sublime passage, glowing with impatience at his inactivity, and with his ardent desire to mingle in the affray of which these sounds were the introduction. "If I could but drag myself," he said, "to yonder window, that I might see how this brave game is like to go! If I had but bow to shoot a shaft, or battle-ax to strike were it but a single blow for our deliverance! It is in vain, it is in vain! I am alike nerveless and weaponless!"

"Fret not thyself, noble knight," answered Rebecca. "The sounds have ceased of a sudden. It may be they join not battle."

"Thou knowest naught of it," said Wilfred impatiently. "This dead pause only shows that the men are at their posts on the walls, and expecting an instant attack. What we have heard was but the distant muttering of the storm: it will burst anon in all its fury. Could I but reach yonder window!"

"Thou wilt but injure thyself by the attempt, noble knight," replied his attendant. Observing his extreme solicitude, she firmly added, "I myself will stand at the lattice, and describe to you as I can what passes without."

"You must not, you shall not!" exclaimed Ivanhoe. "Each lattice, each aperture, will be soon a mark for the archers. Some random shaft"—

"It shall be welcome!" murmured Rebecca, as with firm pace she ascended two or three steps which led to the window of which they spoke.

"Rebecca!" exclaimed Ivanhoe, "this is no maiden's pastime. Do not expose thyself to wounds and death, and render me forever miserable for having given the occasion: at least cover thyself with yonder ancient buckler, and show as little of your person at the lattice as may be."

Following with wonderful promptitude the directions of Ivanhoe, and availing herself of the protection of the large ancient shield, which she placed against the lower part of the window, Rebecca, with tolerable security to herself, could witness part of what was passing without the castle, and report to Ivanhoe the preparations which the assailants were making for the storm. Indeed, the situation which she thus obtained was peculiarly favorable for this purpose, because, being placed on an angle of the main building, Rebecca could not only see what passed beyond the precincts of the castle, but also commanded a view of the outwork likely to be the first object of the meditated assault. It was an exterior fortification of no great height or strength, intended to protect the postern gate, through which Cedric had been recently dismissed by Front-de-Bœuf. The castle moat divided this species of barbican from the rest of the fortress, so that, in case of its being taken, it was easy to cut off the communication with the main building by withdrawing the temporary bridge. In the outwork was a sallyport corresponding to the postern of the castle, and the whole was surmounted by a strong palisade. Rebecca could observe, from the number of men

placed for the defense of this post, that the besieged entertained apprehensions for its safety; and, from the mustering of the assailants in a direction nearly opposite to the outwork, it seemed no less plain that it had been selected as a vulnerable point of attack.

These appearances she hastily communicated to Ivanhoe, and added, "The skirts of the wood seem lined with archers, although only a few are advanced from its dark shadow."

"Under what banner?" asked Ivanhoe.

"Under no ensign of war which I can observe," answered Rebecca.

"A singular novelty," muttered the knight, "to advance to storm such a castle without pennon or banner displayed! Seest thou who they be that act as leaders?"

"A knight clad in sable armor is the most conspicuous," said the Jewess: "he alone is armed from head to heel, and seems to assume the direction of all around him."

"What device does he bear on his shield?" replied Ivanhoe.

"Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on the black shield."

"A fetterlock[1] and shacklebolt azure," said Ivanhoe. "I know not who may bear the device, but well I ween[2] it might now be mine own. Canst thou not see the motto?"

"Scarce the device itself at this distance," replied Rebecca; "but, when the sun glances fair upon his shield, it shows as I tell you."

"Seem there no other leaders?" exclaimed the anxious inquirer.

"None of mark and distinction that I can behold from this station," said Rebecca; "but doubtless the other side of the

[1] A shackle or fetter fixed to a horse's leg to prevent his running away when turned out to pasture. It was frequently used as a device on coats of arms.

[2] Fancy; wish; the meaning being, that he wishes he himself were now fighting with it.

castle is also assailed. They appear even now preparing to advance. God of Zion protect us! What a dreadful sight! Those who advance first bear huge shields, and defenses made of plank; the others follow, bending their bows as they come on. They raise their bows! — God of Moses, forgive the creatures thou hast made!"

Her description was here suddenly interrupted by the signal for assault, which was given by the blast of a shrill bugle, and at once answered by a flourish of the Norman trumpets from the battlements, which, mingled with the deep and hollow clang of the nakers (a species of kettledrum), retorted in notes of defiance the challenge of the enemy. The shouts of both parties augmented the fearful din, the assailants crying, "St. George for merry England!" and the Normans answering them with cries of "*En avant*,[1] *De Bracy!—Beau-seant!*[2] *Beau-seant!—Front-de-Bœuf à la rescousse!*"[3] according to the war-cries of their different commanders.

It was not, however, by clamor that the contest was to be decided, and the desperate efforts of the assailants were met by an equally vigorous defense on the part of the besieged. The archers, trained by their woodland pastimes to the most effective use of the longbow, shot, to use the appropriate phrase of the time, so "wholly together" that no point at which a defender could show the least part of his person escaped their cloth-yard shafts.[4] By this heavy discharge, which continued as thick and sharp as hail, while, notwithstanding, every arrow had its individual aim, and flew by scores together against each embrasure and opening in the parapets, as well as at every window where a defender either occasionally had post, or might be suspected to be stationed, —by this sustained discharge two or three of the garrison were slain, and several others wounded. But confident in their armor of proof, and in the cover which their situation afforded, the followers of Front-de-Bœuf and his allies showed an obstinacy in

[1] "Onward!" [2] See note, p. 132. [3] "To the rescue!"
[4] Arrows the length of a cloth-yard stick.

defense proportioned to the fury of the attack, and replied with the discharge of their large crossbows, as well as with their longbows, slings, and other missile weapons, to the close and continued shower of arrows, and, as the assailants were necessarily but indifferently protected, did considerably more damage than they received at their hand. The whizzing of shafts and of missiles on both sides was only interrupted by the shouts which arose when either side inflicted or sustained some notable loss.

"And I must lie here like a bedridden monk," exclaimed Ivanhoe, "while the game that gives me freedom or death is played out by the hand of others! — Look from the window once again, kind maiden, but beware that you are not marked by the archers beneath. Look out once more, and tell me if they yet advance to the storm."

With patient courage, strengthened by the interval which she had employed in mental devotion, Rebecca again took post at the lattice, sheltering herself, however, so as not to be visible from beneath.

"What dost thou see, Rebecca?" again demanded the wounded knight.

"Nothing but the cloud of arrows flying so thick as to dazzle mine eyes, and to hide the bowmen who shoot them."

"That cannot endure," said Ivanhoe. "If they press not right on to carry the castle by pure force of arms, the archery may avail but little against stone walls and bulwarks. Look for the knight of the fetterlock, fair Rebecca, and see how he bears himself; for as the leader is, so will his followers be."

"I see him not," said Rebecca.

"Foul craven!" exclaimed Ivanhoe. "Does he blench from the helm when the wind blows highest?"

"He blenches not, he blenches not!" said Rebecca. "I see him now. He leads a body of men close under the outer barrier of the barbican. They pull down the piles and palisades. They hew down the barriers with axes. His high black plume floats abroad over the throng like a raven over the field of the slain.

They have made a breach in the barriers — they rush in — they are thrust back! Front-de-Bœuf heads the defenders: I see his gigantic form above the press. They throng again to the breach, and the pass is disputed hand to hand and man to man. God of Jacob! it is the meeting of two fierce tides, the conflict of two oceans moved by adverse winds."

She turned her head from the lattice, as if unable longer to endure a sight so terrible.

"Look forth again, Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, mistaking the cause of her retiring. "The archery must in some degree have ceased, since they are now fighting hand to hand. Look again. There is now less danger."

Rebecca again looked forth, and almost immediately exclaimed, "Holy prophets of the law! Front-de-Bœuf and the Black Knight fight hand to hand on the breach, amid the roar of their followers, who watch the progress of the strife. Heaven strike with the cause of the oppressed and of the captive!" She then uttered a loud shriek, and exclaimed, "He is down! He is down!"

"Who is down?" cried Ivanhoe. "For Our dear Lady's sake, tell me which has fallen!"

"The Black Knight," answered Rebecca faintly, then instantly again shouted with joyful eagerness, "But no, but no! — the name of the Lord of hosts be blessed! — he is on foot again, and fights as if there were twenty men's strength in his single arm. His sword is broken. He snatches an ax from a yeoman. He presses Front-de-Bœuf with blow on blow. The giant stoops and totters like an oak under the steel of the woodman. He falls! He falls!"

"Front-de-Bœuf?" exclaimed Ivanhoe.

"Front-de-Bœuf!" answered the Jewess. His men rush to the rescue, headed by the haughty Templar. Their united force compels the champion to pause. They drag Front-de-Bœuf within the walls."

"The assailants have won the barriers, have they not?" said Ivanhoe.

"They have, they have!" exclaimed Rebecca, "and they press the besieged hard upon the outer wall. Some plant ladders, some swarm like bees, and endeavor to ascend upon the shoulders of each other. Down go stones, beams, and trunks of trees upon their heads; and as fast as they bear the wounded to the rear, fresh men supply their places in the assault. Great God! hast thou given men thine own image that it should be thus cruelly defaced by the hands of their brethren?"

"Think not of that," said Ivanhoe: "this is no time for such thoughts. Who yield? Who push their way?"

"The ladders are thrown down," replied Rebecca, shuddering: "the soldiers lie groveling under them like crushed reptiles. The besieged have the better."

"St. George strike for us!" exclaimed the knight. "Do the false yeomen give way?"

"No!" exclaimed Rebecca, "they bear themselves right yeomanly. The Black Knight approaches the postern with his huge ax. The thundering blows which he deals, you may hear them above all the din and shouts of the battle. Stones and beams are hailed down on the bold champion. He regards them no more than if they were thistle-down or feathers."

"By St. John of Acre!"[1] said Ivanhoe, raising himself joyfully on his couch, "methought there was but one man in England that might do such a deed."

"The postern gate shakes!" continued Rebecca. "It crashes! It is splintered by his blows! They rush in! The outwork is won! O God! they hurl the defenders from the battlements! They throw them into the moat! — O men, if ye be indeed men, spare them that can resist no longer!"

"The bridge — the bridge which communicates with the castle — have they won that pass?" exclaimed Ivanhoe.

"No," replied Rebecca, "the Templar has destroyed the plank on which they crossed. Few of the defenders escaped with him into the castle. The shrieks and cries which you hear

[1] See note, p. 52.

tell the fate of the others. Alas! I see it is still more difficult to look upon victory than upon battle."

"What do they do now, maiden?" said Ivanhoe. "Look forth yet again. This is no time to faint at bloodshed."

"It is over for the time," answered Rebecca. "Our friends strengthen themselves within the outwork which they have mastered; and it affords them so good a shelter from the foemen's shot that the garrison only bestow a few bolts on it from interval to interval, as if rather to disquiet than effectually to injure them."

"Our friends," said Wilfred, "will surely not abandon an enterprise so gloriously begun and so happily attained. Oh, no! I will put my faith in the good knight whose ax hath rent heart of oak and bars of iron. Singular," he again muttered to himself, "if there be two who can do a deed of such *derring-do*.[1] A fetterlock, and a shacklebolt on a field-sable—what may that mean? Seest thou naught else, Rebecca, by which the Black Knight may be distinguished?"

"Nothing," said the Jewess. "All about him is black as the wing of the night-raven. Nothing can I spy that can mark him further; but, having once seen him put forth his strength in battle, methinks I could know him again among a thousand warriors. He rushes to the fray as if he were summoned to a banquet. There is more than mere strength: there seems as if the whole soul and spirit of the champion were given to every blow which he deals upon his enemies. God assoilzie[2] him of the sin of bloodshed! It is fearful, yet magnificent, to behold how the arm and heart of one man can triumph over hundreds."

"Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, "thou hast painted a hero. Surely they rest but to refresh their force, or to provide the means for crossing the moat. Under such a leader as thou hast spoken this knight to be, there are no craven fears, no cold-blooded delays, no yielding up a gallant emprise;[3] since the difficulties which render it arduous render it also glorious. I swear by the honor

[1] Desperate courage. [2] Absolve. [3] Enterprise.

of my house, I vow by the name of my bright lady-love, I would endure ten years' captivity to fight one day by that good knight's side in such a quarrel as this!"

"Alas!" said Rebecca, leaving her station at the window, and approaching the couch of the wounded knight, "this impatient yearning after action, this struggling with and repining at your present weakness, will not fail to injure your returning health. How couldst thou hope to inflict wounds on others ere that be healed which thou thyself hast received?"

"Rebecca," he replied, "thou knowest not how impossible it is for one trained to actions of chivalry to remain passive as a priest or a woman when they are acting deeds of honor around him. The love of battle is the food upon which we live, the dust of the *mêlée*[1] is the breath of our nostrils. We live not, we wish not to live, longer than while we are victorious and renowned. Such, maiden, are the laws of chivalry, to which we are sworn, and to which we offer all that we hold dear."

"Alas!" said the fair Jewess, "and what is it, valiant knight, save an offering of sacrifice to a demon of vainglory, and a passing through the fire to Moloch?[2] What remains to you as the prize of all the blood you have spilled, of all the travail and pain you have endured, of all the tears which your deeds have caused, when death hath broken the strong man's spear, and overtaken the speed of his war-horse?"

"What remains?" cried Ivanhoe. "Glory, maiden, glory, which gilds our sepulcher, and embalms our name."

"Glory?" continued Rebecca. "Alas! is the rusted mail which hangs as a hatchment[3] over the champion's dim and moldering tomb, is the defaced sculpture of the inscription which the ignorant monk can hardly read to the inquiring pilgrim,— are these sufficient rewards for the sacrifice of every kindly affec-

[1] Hand-to-hand fight; the tumult of confused combat.

[2] The fire-god worshiped by Ammonites with human sacrifices.

[3] A tablet, usually lozenge-shaped or square, displaying the arms of a dead person, and set over the tomb.

tion, for a life spent miserably that ye may make others miserable?"

"By the soul of Hereward!"[1] replied the knight impatiently, "thou speakest, maiden, of thou knowest not what. Thou wouldst quench the pure light of chivalry, which alone distinguishes the noble from the base, the gentle knight from the churl and the savage; which rates our life far, far beneath the pitch of our honor, raises us victorious over pain, toil, and suffering, and teaches us to fear no evil but disgrace. Thou art no Christian, Rebecca; and to thee are unknown those high feelings which swell the bosom of a noble maiden when her lover hath done some deed of emprise which sanctions his flame. Chivalry! Why, maiden, she is the nurse of pure and high affection, the stay of the oppressed, the redresser of grievances, the curb of the power of the tyrant. Nobility were but an empty name without her, and liberty finds the best protection in her lance and her sword."

"I am indeed," said Rebecca, "sprung from a race whose courage was distinguished in the defense of their own land, but who warred not, even while yet a nation, save at the command of the Deity, or in defending their country from oppression. The sound of the trumpet wakes Judah no longer, and her despised children are now but the unresisting victims of hostile and military oppression. Well hast thou spoken, Sir Knight. Until the God of Jacob shall raise up for his chosen people a second Gideon[2] or a new Maccabeus,[3] it ill beseemeth the Jewish damsel to speak of battle or of war."

[1] A traditional outlaw who flourished from about 1070; the son of Leofric, Lord of Bourne, in Lincolnshire, chief of a band of insurgent outlaws who, holding together in the Isle of Ely, made stubborn resistance against William.

[2] A great and renowned judge of Israel, B.C. 1362–22. He was the fifth judge in Israel (see Judges vi.–ix.).

[3] The surname of Judas Maccabeus (Hebrew, *Makkab*, "a hammer"), a celebrated Jewish leader. His family and descendants also had the name Maccabees (see Book of Maccabees in the Apocrypha).

The high-minded maiden concluded the argument in a tone of sorrow, which deeply expressed her sense of the degradation of her people, embittered perhaps by the idea that Ivanhoe considered her as one not entitled to interfere in a case of honor, and incapable of entertaining or expressing sentiments of honor and generosity.

"How little he knows this bosom," she said, "to imagine that cowardice or meanness of soul must needs be its guests, because I have censured the fantastic chivalry of the Nazarenes! Would to Heaven that the shedding of mine own blood drop by drop could redeem the captivity of Judah! Nay, would to God it could avail to set free my father, and this his benefactor, from the chains of the oppressor! The proud Christian should then see whether the daughter of God's chosen people dared not to die as bravely as the vainest Nazarene maiden, that boasts her descent from some petty chieftain of the rude and frozen north!"

She then looked towards the couch of the wounded knight.

"He sleeps," she said. "Nature exhausted by sufferance and the waste of spirits, his wearied frame embraces the first moment of temporary relaxation to sink into slumber. Alas! is it a crime that I should look upon him, when it may be for the last time; when yet but a short space, and those fair features will be no longer animated by the bold and buoyant spirit which forsakes them not even in sleep; when the nostrils shall be distended, the mouth agape, the eyes fixed and bloodshot; and when the proud and noble knight may be trodden on by the lowest caitiff of this accursed castle, yet stir not when the heel is lifted up against him? And my father! O my father! evil is it with his daughter, when his gray hairs are not remembered because of the golden locks of youth! What know I but that these evils are the messengers of Jehovah's wrath to the unnatural child who thinks of a stranger's captivity before a parent's; who forgets the desolation of Judah, and looks upon the comeliness of a Gentile and a stranger? But I will tear this folly from my heart, though every fiber bleed as I rend it away!"

She wrapped herself closely in her veil, and sat down at a distance from the couch of the wounded knight, with her back turned towards it, fortifying, or endeavoring to fortify, her mind, not only against the impending evils from without, but also against those treacherous feelings which assailed her from within.

CHAPTER XXX.

DURING the interval of quiet which followed the first success of the besiegers, while the one party was preparing to pursue their advantage, and the other to strengthen their means of defense, the Templar and De Bracy held brief council together in the hall of the castle.

"Where is Front-de-Bœuf?" said the latter, who had superintended the defense of the fortress on the other side. "Men say he hath been slain."

"He lives," said the Templar coolly—"lives as yet; but had he worn the bull's head of which he bears the name, and ten plates of iron to fence it withal, he must have gone down before yonder fatal ax. Yet a few hours, and Front-de-Bœuf is with his fathers,—a powerful limb lopped off Prince John's enterprise."

"And a brave addition to the kingdom of Satan," said De Bracy. "This comes of reviling saints and angels, and ordering images of holy things and holy men to be flung down on the heads of these rascaille yeomen."

"Go to, thou art a fool!" said the Templar. "Thy superstition is upon a level with Front-de-Bœuf's want of faith: neither of you can render a reason for your belief or unbelief."

"*Benedicite*, Sir Templar," replied De Bracy, "I pray you to keep better rule with your tongue when I am the theme of it. By the Mother of Heaven! I am a better Christian man than thou and thy fellowship; for the *bruit*[1] goeth shrewdly out, that

[1] Rumor; report.

the most holy Order of the Temple of Zion nurseth not a few heretics within its bosom, and that Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is of the number."

"Care not for such reports," said the Templar; "but let us think of making good the castle. How fought these villain yeomen on thy side?"

"Like fiends incarnate," said De Bracy. "They swarmed close up to the walls, headed, as I think, by the knave who won the prize at the archery, for I knew his horn and baldric. And this is old Fitzurse's boasted policy, encouraging these malapert[1] knaves to rebel against us! Had I not been armed in proof, the villain had marked me down seven times with as little remorse as if I had been a buck in season. He told every rivet on my armor with a cloth-yard shaft, that rapped against my ribs with as little compunction as if my bones had been of iron. But that I wore a shirt of Spanish mail under my plate coat, I had been fairly sped."[2]

"But you maintained your post?" said the Templar. "We lost the outwork on our part."

"That is a shrewd loss," said De Bracy. "The knaves will find cover there to assault the castle more closely, and may, if not well watched, gain some unguarded corner of a tower, or some forgotten window, and so break in upon us. Our numbers are too few for the defenses of every point, and the men complain that they can nowhere show themselves but they are the mark for as many arrows as a parish-butt[3] on a holiday even. Front-de-Bœuf is dying, too, so we shall receive no more aid from his bull's head and brutal strength. — How think you, Sir Brian? Were we not better make a virtue of necessity, and compound with the rogues by delivering up our prisoners?"

"How?" exclaimed the Templar. "Deliver up our prisoners, and stand an object alike of ridicule and execration, as the doughty warriors who dared by a night attack to possess them-

[1] Impudent. [2] Undone; made an end of.

[3] A target for archery practice put up in a churchyard.

selves of the persons of a party of defenseless travelers, yet could not make good a strong castle against a vagabond troop of outlaws, led by swineherds, jesters, and the very refuse of mankind? Shame on thy counsel, Maurice de Bracy! The ruins of this castle shall bury both my body and my shame ere I consent to such base and dishonorable composition." [1]

"Let us to the walls, then," said De Bracy carelessly. "That man never breathed, be he Turk or Templar, who held life at a lighter rate than I do. But I trust there is no dishonor in wishing I had here some twoscore of my gallant troop of Free Companions. — O my brave lances! if ye knew but how hard your captain were this day bested, how soon would I see my banner at the head of your clump of spears, and how short while would these rabble villains stand to endure encounter!"

"Wish for whom thou wilt," said the Templar, "but let us make what defense we can with the soldiers who remain. They are chiefly Front-de-Bœuf's followers, hated by the English for a thousand acts of insolence and oppression."

"The better," said De Bracy. "The rugged slaves will defend themselves to the last drop of their blood ere they encounter the revenge of the peasants without. Let us up and be doing, then, Brian de Bois-Guilbert; and, live or die, thou shalt see Maurice de Bracy bear himself this day as a gentleman of blood and lineage."

"To the walls!" answered the Templar; and they both ascended the battlements to do all that skill could dictate and manhood accomplish in defense of the place. They readily agreed that the point of greatest danger was that opposite to the outwork of which the assailants had possessed themselves. The castle, indeed, was divided from that barbican by the moat, and it was impossible that the besiegers could assail the postern door, with which the outwork corresponded, without surmounting that obstacle; but it was the opinion, both of the Templar and De Bracy, that the besiegers, if governed by the same policy their

[1] Agreement; conditions.

leader had already displayed, would endeavor, by a formidable assault, to draw the chief part of the defenders' observation to this point, and take measures to avail themselves of every negligence which might take place in the defense elsewhere. To guard against such an evil, their numbers only permitted the knights to place sentinels from space to space along the walls in communication with each other, who might give the alarm whenever danger was threatened. Meanwhile they agreed that De Bracy should command the defense at the postern, and the Templar should keep with him a score of men or thereabouts as a body of reserve, ready to hasten to any other point which might be suddenly threatened. The loss of the barbican had also this unfortunate effect: that notwithstanding the superior heights of the castle walls, the besieged could not see from them, with the same precision as before, the operations of the enemy; for some straggling underwood approached so near the sallyport of the outwork, that the assailants might introduce into it whatever force they thought proper, not only under cover, but even without the knowledge of the defenders. Utterly uncertain, therefore, upon what point the storm was to burst, De Bracy and his companion were under the necessity of providing against every possible contingency; and their followers, however brave, experienced the anxious dejection of mind incident to men inclosed by enemies who possessed the power of choosing their time and mode of attack.

Meanwhile the lord of the beleaguered and endangered castle lay upon a bed of bodily pain and mental agony. The moment had now arrived when earth and all its treasures were gliding from before his eyes, and when the savage baron's heart, though hard as a nether millstone, became appalled as he gazed forward into the waste darkness of futurity. The fever of his body aided the impatience and agony of his mind, and his death-bed exhibited a mixture of the newly awakened feelings of horror, combating with the fixed and inveterate obstinacy of his disposition, —a fearful state of mind, only to be equaled in those tremen-

dous regions where there are complaints without hope, remorse without repentance, a dreadful sense of present agony, and a presentiment that it cannot cease or be diminished.

"Where be these dog priests now," growled the baron, "who set such price on their ghostly mummery? Where be all those unshod Carmelites for whom old Front-de-Bœuf founded the Convent of St. Anne, robbing his heir of many a fair rood of meadow, and many a fat field and close?[1] Where be the greedy hounds now? Swilling, I warrant me, at the ale, or playing their juggling tricks at the bedside of some miserly churl. Me, the heir of their founder — me, whom their foundation binds them to pray for — me — ungrateful villains as they are — they suffer to die like the houseless dog on yonder common, unshriven[2] and unhouseled.[3] Tell the Templar to come hither: he is a priest, and may do something. But no! As well confess myself to the Devil as to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. I have heard old men talk of prayer, — prayer by their own voice. Such need not to court or to bribe the false priest. But I — I dare not!"

"Lives Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said a broken and shrill voice close by his bedside, "to say there is that which he dares not?"

The evil conscience and the shaken nerves of Front-de-Bœuf heard, in this strange interruption to his soliloquy, the voice of one of those demons, who, as the superstition of the times believed, beset the beds of dying men, to distract their thoughts and turn them from the meditations which concerned their eternal welfare. He shuddered, and drew himself together; but, instantly summoning up his wonted resolution, he exclaimed, "Who is there? What art thou, that darest to echo my words in a tone like that of the night-raven? Come before my couch, that I may see thee!"

"I am thine evil angel, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," replied the voice.

[1] Inclosed ground. [2] Unconfessed; unabsolved.
[3] The sacrament unadministered.

"Let me behold thee, then, in thy bodily shape, if thou be'st indeed a fiend," replied the dying knight. "Think not that I will blench from thee. By the eternal dungeon, could I but grapple with these horrors that hover round me, as I have done with mortal dangers, Heaven should never say that I shrunk from the conflict!"

"Think on thy sins, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said the almost unearthly voice, "on rebellion, on murder! Who stirred up John to war against his gray-headed father, against his generous brother?"

"Be thou fiend, priest, or devil," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "thou liest in thy throat! Not I stirred John to rebellion—not I alone: there were fifty knights and barons, the flower of the midland counties. Better men never laid lance in rest. And must I answer for the fault done by fifty? False fiend, I defy thee! Depart, and haunt my couch no more! Let me die in peace if thou be mortal: if thou be a demon, thy time is not yet come."

"In peace thou shalt NOT die," repeated the voice. "Even in death shalt thou think on thy murders, on the groans which this castle has echoed, on the blood that is ingrained in its floors!"

"Thou canst not shake me by thy petty malice," answered Front-de-Bœuf with a ghastly and constrained laugh. "The infidel Jew—it was merit with Heaven to deal with him as I did, else wherefore are men canonized who dip their hands in the blood of Saracens? The Saxon porkers whom I have slain—they were the foes of my country and of my lineage and of my liege lord. Ho, ho! thou seest there is no crevice in my coat of plate. Art thou fled? Art thou silenced?"

"No, foul parricide!" replied the voice. "Think of thy father! Think of his death! Think of his banquet-room flooded with his gore, and that poured forth by the hand of a son!"

"Ha!" answered the baron after a long pause, "an thou knowest that thou art indeed the author of evil, and as omnis-

cient as the monks call thee. That secret I deemed locked in my own breast and in that of one beside. Go, leave me, fiend, and seek the Saxon witch Ulrica, who alone could tell thee what she and I alone witnessed. Go, I say, to her, who washed the wounds, and straighted the corpse, and gave to the slain man the outward show of one parted in time and in the course of nature. Go to her! Let her, as well as I, taste of the tortures of the hereafter!"

"She already tastes them," said Ulrica, stepping before the couch of Front-de-Bœuf. "She hath long drunken of this cup, and its bitterness is now sweetened to see that thou dost partake it. Grind not thy teeth, Front-de-Bœuf; roll not thine eyes; clinch not thy hand, nor shake it at me with that gesture of menace! The hand which, like that of thy renowned ancestor, who gained thy name, could have broken with one stroke the skull of a mountain bull, is now unnerved and powerless as mine own!"

"Vile hag!" replied Front-de-Bœuf, "detestable screech-owl! it is, then, thou who art come to exult over the ruins thou hast assisted to lay low?"

"Ay, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," answered she, "it is Ulrica, it is the daughter of the murdered Torquil Wolfganger, it is the sister of his slaughtered sons. Front-de-Bœuf, thou hast been my evil angel, and I will be thine. I will dog thee till the very instant of dissolution!"

"Detestable fury!" exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf, "that moment shalt thou never witness. — Ho! Giles, Clement, and Eustace, St. Maur and Stephen, seize this witch, and hurl her from the battlements headlong. She has betrayed us to the Saxon! Ho! St. Maur, Clement! false-hearted knaves, where tarry ye?"

"Call on them again, valiant baron," said the hag with a smile of grisly mockery. "Summon thy vassals around thee, doom them that loiter to the scourge and the dungeon. But know, mighty chief," she continued, suddenly changing her tone, "thou shalt have neither answer, nor aid, nor obedience, at their hands. Listen to these horrid sounds!" for the din of the recommenced

assault and defense now rung fearfully loud from the battlement of the castle. "In that war-cry is the downfall of thy house. The blood-cemented fabric of Front-de-Bœuf's power totters to the foundation, and before the foes he most despised. The Saxon, Reginald,—the scorned Saxon,—assails thy walls! Why liest thou here like a worn-out hind, when the Saxon storms thy place of strength?"

"Gods and fiends!" exclaimed the wounded knight. "Oh for one moment's strength, to drag myself to the *mêlée*, and perish as becomes my name!"

"Think not of it, valiant warrior!" replied she. "Thou shalt die no soldier's death, but perish like the fox in his den when the peasants have set fire to the cover[1] around it."

"Hateful hag, thou liest!" exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf. "My followers bear them bravely; my walls are strong and high; my comrades in arms fear not a whole host of Saxons, were they headed by Hengist and Horsa. The war-cry of the Templar and of the Free Companions rises high over the conflict. And by mine honor, when we kindle the blazing beacon, for joy of our defense, it shall consume thee, body and bones; and I shall live to hear thou art gone from earthly fires to those that never sent forth an incarnate fiend more utterly diabolical."

"Hold thy belief," replied Ulrica, "till the proof reach thee—But no!" she said, interrupting herself, "thou shalt know even now the doom which all thy power, strength, and courage is unable to avoid, though it is prepared for thee by this feeble hand. Markest thou the smouldering and suffocating vapor which already eddies in sable folds through the chamber? Didst thou think it was but the darkening of thy bursting eyes, the difficulty of thy cumbered breathing? No! Front-de-Bœuf, there is another cause. Rememberest thou the magazine of fuel that is stored beneath these apartments?"

"Woman!" he exclaimed with fury, "thou hast not set fire to it? By Heaven, thou hast, and the castle is in flames!"

[1] Low scrub; underbrush

"They are fast rising, at least," said Ulrica with frightful composure; "and a signal shall soon wave to warn the besiegers to press hard upon those who would extinguish them. Farewell, Front-de-Bœuf! May Mista, Skogula, and Zernebock, the gods of the ancient Saxons, — fiends, as the priests now call them, — supply the place of comforters at your dying bed, which Ulrica now relinquishes! But know, if it will give thee comfort to know it, that Ulrica is bound to the same dark coast with thyself, the companion of thy punishment. And now, parricide, farewell forever! May each stone of this vaulted roof find a tongue to echo that title into thine ear!"

So saying, she left the apartment; and Front-de-Bœuf could hear the crash of the ponderous key as she locked and double-locked the door behind her, thus cutting off the most slender chance of escape. In the extremity of agony he shouted upon his servants and allies, "Stephen and St. Maur, Clement and Giles! I burn here unaided! To the rescue, to the rescue, brave Bois-Guilbert, valiant De Bracy! It is Front-de-Bœuf who calls! It is your master, ye traitor squires! — your ally, your brother-in-arms, ye perjured and faithless knights! Traitors, do you abandon me to perish thus miserably! — They hear me not! They cannot hear me: my voice is lost in the din of battle. The smoke rolls thicker and thicker; the fire has caught upon the floor below. Oh for one draught of the air of heaven, were it to be purchased by instant annihilation!" And in the mad frenzy of despair, the wretch now shouted with the shouts of the fighters, now muttered curses on himself, on mankind, and on Heaven itself. "The red fire flashes through the thick smoke!" he exclaimed. "The Demon marches against me under the banner of his own element. — Foul spirit, avoid! I go not with thee without my comrades. All, all are thine, — that garrison, these walls. Thinkest thou Front-de-Bœuf will be singled out to go alone? No! The infidel Templar, De Bracy, Ulrica, the men who aided my enterprises, the dog Saxons and accursed Jews who are my prisoners, — all, all shall attend me, a goodly

fellowship as ever took the downward road. Ha, ha, ha!" and he laughed in his frenzy till the vaulted roof rang again. "Who laughed there?" exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf in altered mood, for the noise of the conflict did not prevent the echoes of his own mad laughter from returning upon his ear. "Who laughed there? — Ulrica, was it thou? Speak, witch, and I forgive thee; for only thou or the Fiend himself could have laughed at such a moment. Avaunt,[1] avaunt!" —

But it were impious to trace any further the picture of the blasphemer and parricide's death-bed.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CEDRIC, although not greatly confident in Ulrica's message, omitted not to communicate her promise to the Black Knight and Locksley. They were well pleased to find they had a friend within the place, who might, in the moment of need, be able to facilitate their entrance, and readily agreed with the Saxon that a storm, under whatever disadvantages, ought to be attempted, as the only means of liberating the prisoners now in the hands of the cruel Front-de-Bœuf.

"The royal blood of Alfred is endangered," said Cedric.

"True," said the Black Knight. — "And now, good Locksley, were it not well that noble Cedric should assume the direction of this assault?"

"Not a jot I," returned Cedric. "I have never been wont to study either how to take or how to hold out those abodes of tyrannic power which the Normans have erected in this groaning land. I will fight among the foremost; but my honest neighbors well know I am not a trained soldier in the discipline of wars or the attack of strongholds."

"Since it stands thus with the noble Cedric," said Locksley,

[1] Depart!

"I am most willing to take on me the direction of the archery; and ye shall hang me up on my own trysting-tree, an the defenders be permitted to show themselves over the walls without being stuck with as many shafts as there are cloves in a gammon of bacon at Christmas."

"Well said, stout yeoman," answered the Black Knight; "and if I be thought worthy to have a charge in these matters, and can find among these brave men so many as are willing to follow a true English knight, for so I may surely call myself, I am ready, with such skill as my experience has taught me, to lead them to the attack of these walls."

The parts being thus distributed to the leaders, they commenced the first assault, of which the reader has already heard the issue.

When the barbican was carried, the Sable Knight sent notice of the happy event to Locksley, requesting him at the same time to keep such a strict observation on the castle as might prevent the defenders from combining their force for a sudden sally, and recovering the outwork which they had lost. This the knight was chiefly desirous of avoiding, conscious that the men whom he led, being hasty and untrained volunteers, imperfectly armed and unaccustomed to discipline, must, upon any sudden attack, fight at great disadvantage with the veteran soldiers of the Norman knights, who were well provided with arms both defensive and offensive, and who, to match the zeal and high spirit of the besiegers, had all the confidence which arises from perfect discipline and the habitual use of weapons.

The knight employed the interval in causing to be constructed a sort of floating bridge, or long raft, by means of which he hoped to cross the moat in despite of the resistance of the enemy. This was a work of some time, which the leaders the less regretted, as it gave Ulrica leisure to execute her plan of diversion in their favor, whatever that might be.

When the raft was completed, the Black Knight addressed the besiegers: "It avails not waiting here longer, my friends. The

sun is descending to the west, and I have that upon my hands which will not permit me to tarry with you another day. Besides, it will be a marvel if the horsemen come not upon us from York, unless we speedily accomplish our purpose. Wherefore one of ye go to Locksley, and bid him commence a discharge of arrows on the opposite side of the castle, and move forward as if about to assault it; and you, true English hearts, stand by me, and be ready to thrust the raft endlong over the moat whenever the postern on our side is thrown open. Follow me boldly across, and aid me to burst yon sallyport in the main wall of the castle. As many of you as like not this service, or are but ill armed to meet it, do you man the top of the outwork, draw your bowstrings to your ears, and mind you quell with your shot whatever shall appear to man the rampart. — Noble Cedric, wilt thou take the direction of those which remain?"

"Not so, by the soul of Hereward!" said the Saxon, "lead I cannot; but may posterity curse me in my grave if I follow not with the foremost wherever thou shalt point the way. The quarrel is mine, and well it becomes me to be in the van of the battle."

"Yet, bethink thee, noble Saxon," said the knight, "thou hast neither hauberk nor corselet, nor aught but that light helmet, target, and sword."

"The better," answered Cedric: "I shall be the lighter to climb these walls. And — forgive the boast, Sir Knight — thou shalt this day see the naked breast of a Saxon as boldly presented to the battle as ever ye beheld the steel corselet of a Norman."

"In the name of God, then," said the knight, "fling open the door, and launch the floating bridge."

The portal, which led from the inner wall of the barbican to the moat, and which corresponded with a sallyport in the main wall of the castle, was now suddenly opened; the temporary bridge was then thrust forward, and soon flashed in the waters, extending its length between the castle and outwork, and forming a slippery and precarious passage for two men abreast to cross

the moat. Well aware of the importance of taking the foe by surprise, the Black Knight, closely followed by Cedric, threw himself upon the bridge, and reached the opposite side. Here he began to thunder with his ax upon the gate of the castle, protected in part, from the shot and stones cast by the defenders, by the ruins of the former drawbridge, which the Templar had demolished in his retreat from the barbican, leaving the counterpoise[1] still attached to the upper part of the portal. The followers of the knight had no such shelter. Two were instantly shot with crossbow bolts, and two more fell into the moat: the others retreated back into the barbican.

The situation of Cedric and of the Black Knight was now truly dangerous, and would have been still more so but for the constancy of the archers in the barbican, who ceased not to shower their arrows upon the battlements, distracting the attention of those by whom they were manned, and thus affording a respite to their two chiefs from the storm of missiles which must otherwise have overwhelmed them. But their situation was eminently perilous, and was becoming more so with every moment.

"Shame on ye all!" cried De Bracy to the soldiers around him. "Do ye call yourselves crossbow-men, and let these two dogs keep their station under the walls of the castle? Heave over the coping stones from the battlement, an better may not be. Get pickax and levers, and down with that huge pinnacle!" pointing to a heavy piece of stone carved work that projected from the parapet.

At this moment the besiegers caught sight of the red flag upon the angle of the tower which Ulrica had described to Cedric. The good yeoman Locksley was the first who was aware of it, as he was hasting to the outwork, impatient to see the progress of the assault.

"St. George!" he cried, "merry St. George for England! To the charge, bold yeomen! Why leave ye the good knight and noble Cedric to storm the pass alone? Make in,[2] mad

[1] Weight for raising a drawbridge. [2] Rush in.

priest! show thou canst fight for thy rosary! — Make in, brave yeomen! — The castle is ours, we have friends within. See yonder flag, it is the appointed signal. Torquilstone is ours! Think of honor, think of spoil! One effort, and the place is ours!"

With that he bent his good bow, and sent a shaft right through the breast of one of the men-at-arms, who, under De Bracy's direction, was loosening a fragment from one of the battlements to precipitate on the heads of Cedric and the Black Knight. A second soldier caught from the hands of the dying man the iron crow, with which he heaved at and had loosened the stone pinnacle, when, receiving an arrow through his headpiece, he dropped from the battlements into the moat a dead man. The men-at-arms were daunted, for no armor seemed proof against the shot of this tremendous archer.

"Do you give ground, base knaves!" said De Bracy. "*Mount joye Saint Denis!*[1] Give me the lever."

And, snatching it up, he again assailed the loosened pinnacle, which was of weight enough, if thrown down, not only to have destroyed the remnant of the drawbridge, which sheltered the two foremost assailants, but also to have sunk the rude float of planks over which they had crossed. All saw the danger, and the boldest, even the stout friar himself, avoided setting foot on the raft. Thrice did Locksley bend his shaft against De Bracy, and thrice did his arrow bound back from the knight's armor of proof.

"Curse on thy Spanish steel coat!" said Locksley. "Had English smith forged it, these arrows had gone through, and as if it had been silk or sendal."[2] He then began to call out, "Comrades, friends, noble Cedric! bear back and let the ruin fall."

His warning voice was unheard, for the din which the knight

[1] The war-cry of French soldiers. According to tradition, the place where St. Denis suffered martyrdom was a height in Paris termed Mont-joie.

[2] Greek, *sindon* ("a fine cloth"); a kind of thin silk.

himself occasioned by his strokes upon the postern would have drowned twenty war-trumpets. The faithful Gurth indeed sprung forward on the planked bridge to warn Cedric of his impending fate, or to share it with him. But his warning would have come too late. The massive pinnacle already tottered; and De Bracy, who still heaved at his task, would have accomplished it, had not the voice of the Templar sounded close in his ear.

"All is lost, De Bracy! The castle burns!"

"Thou art mad to say so!" replied the knight.

"It is all in a light flame on the western side. I have striven in vain to extinguish it."

With the stern coolness which formed the basis of his character, Brian de Bois-Guilbert communicated this hideous intelligence, which was not so calmly received by his astonished comrade.

"Saints!" said De Bracy, "what is to be done? I vow to St. Nicholas of Limoges[1] a candlestick of pure gold"—

"Spare thy vow," said the Templar, "and mark me. Lead thy men down, as if to a sally. Throw the postern gate open. There are but two men who occupy the float: fling them into the moat, and push across to the barbican. I will charge from the main gate, and attack the barbican on the outside; and if we can regain that post, be assured we shall defend ourselves until we are relieved, or at least till they grant us fair quarter."

"It is well thought upon," said De Bracy. "I will play my part. — Templar, thou wilt not fail me?"

"Hand and glove, I will not!" said Bois-Guilbert. "But haste thee, in the name of God!"

De Bracy hastily drew his men together, and rushed down to the postern gate, which he caused instantly to be thrown open. But scarce was this done, ere the portentous strength of the Black Knight forced his way inward in despite of De Bracy and his followers. Two of the foremost instantly fell, and the rest gave way notwithstanding all their leader's efforts to stop them.

[1] A city of France, in the department of Haute-Vienne.

"Dogs!" said De Bracy, "will you let *two* men win our only pass for safety?"

"He is the Devil!" said a veteran man-at-arms, bearing back from the blows of their sable antagonist.

"And if he be the Devil," replied De Bracy, "would you fly from him into the mouth of hell? — The castle burns behind us, villains! Let despair give you courage, or let me forward! I will cope with this champion myself."

And well and chivalrous did De Bracy that day maintain the fame he had acquired in the civil wars of that dreadful period. The vaulted passages to which the postern gave entrance, and in which these two redoubted champions were now fighting hand to hand, rung with the furious blows which they dealt each other, — De Bracy with his sword, the Black Knight with his ponderous ax. At length the Norman received a blow which, though its force was partly parried by his shield, — for otherwise never more would De Bracy have again moved limb, — descended yet with such violence on his crest, that he measured his length on the paved floor.

"Yield ye, De Bracy," said the Black Champion, stooping over him, and holding against the bars of his helmet the fatal poniard with which the knights dispatched their enemies (and which was called the dagger of mercy) — "yield thee, Maurice de Bracy, rescue or no rescue, or thou art but a dead man."

"I will not yield," replied De Bracy faintly, "to an unknown conqueror. Tell me thy name, or work thy pleasure on me. It shall never be said that Maurice de Bracy was prisoner to a nameless churl."

The Black Knight whispered something into the ear of the vanquished.

"I yield me to be true prisoner, rescue or no rescue," answered the Norman, exchanging his tone of stern and determined obstinacy for one of deep though sullen submission.

"Go to the barbican," said the victor in a tone of authority, "and there wait my further orders."

"Yet first let me say," said De Bracy, "what it imports thee to know: Wilfred of Ivanhoe is wounded and a prisoner, and will perish in the burning castle without present help."

"Wilfred of Ivanhoe!" exclaimed the Black Knight. "Prisoner, and perish! The life of every man in the castle shall answer it if a hair of his head be singed. Show me his chamber!"

"Ascend yonder winding stair," said De Bracy. "It leads to his apartment. Wilt thou accept my guidance?" he added in a submissive voice.

"No. To the barbican, and there wait my orders. I trust thee not, De Bracy."

During this combat and the brief conversation which ensued, Cedric, at the head of a body of men, among whom the friar was conspicuous, had pushed across the bridge, as soon as they saw the postern open, and drove back the dispirited and despairing followers of De Bracy, of whom some asked quarter, some offered vain resistance, and the greater part fled towards the courtyard. De Bracy himself arose from the ground and cast a sorrowful glance after his conqueror. "He trusts me not," he repeated; "but have I deserved his trust?" He then lifted his sword from the floor, took off his helmet in token of submission, and, going to the barbican, gave up his sword to Locksley, whom he met by the way.

As the fire augmented, symptoms of it became soon apparent in the chamber where Ivanhoe was watched and tended by the Jewess Rebecca. He had been awakened from his brief slumber by the noise of the battle; and his attendant, who had, at his anxious desire, again placed herself at the window to watch and report to him the fate of the attack, was for some time prevented from observing either by the increase of the smouldering and stifling vapor. At length the volumes of smoke which rolled into the apartment, the cries for water, which were heard even above the din of the battle, made them sensible of the progress of this new danger.

"The castle burns!" said Rebecca. "It burns! What can we do to save ourselves?"

"Fly, Rebecca, and save thine own life!" said Ivanhoe, "for no human aid can avail me."

"I will not fly," answered Rebecca. "We will be saved or perish together. And yet, great God! My father, my father! What will be his fate?"

At this moment the door of the apartment flew open, and the Templar presented himself, — a ghastly figure, for his gilded armor was broken and bloody, and the plume was partly shorn away, partly burnt from his casque. "I have found thee," said he to Rebecca. "Thou shalt prove I will keep my word to share weal and woe with thee. There is but one path to safety: I have cut my way through fifty dangers to point it to thee. Up, and instantly follow me!"

"Alone," answered Rebecca, "I will not follow thee. If thou hast but a touch of human charity in thee, if thy heart be not as hard as thy breastplate, save my aged father, save this wounded knight!"

"A knight," answered the Templar with his characteristic calmness — "a knight, Rebecca, must encounter his fate, whether it meet him in the shape of sword or flame; and who recks[1] how or where a Jew meets with his?"

"Savage warrior," said Rebecca, "rather will I perish in the flames than accept safety from thee!"

"Thou shalt not choose, Rebecca. Once didst thou foil me, but never mortal did so twice."

So saying, he seized on the terrified maiden, who filled the air with her shrieks, and bore her out of the room in his arms in spite of her cries, and without regarding the menaces and defiance which Ivanhoe thundered against him. "Hound of the Temple, — stain to thine order, — set free the damsel! Traitor of Bois-Guilbert, it is Ivanhoe commands thee! Villain, I will have thy heart's blood!"

[1] Cares.

"I had not found thee, Wilfred," said the Black Knight, who at that instant entered the apartment, "but for thy shouts."

"If thou be'st true knight," said Wilfred, "think not of me: pursue yon robber, save the Lady Rowena, look to the noble Cedric!"

"In their turn," answered he of the fetterlock; "but thine is first."

And seizing upon Ivanhoe, he bore him off with as much ease as the Templar had carried off Rebecca, rushed with him to the postern, and, having there delivered his burden to the care of two yeomen, he again entered the castle to assist in the rescue of the other prisoners.

One turret was now in bright flames, which flashed out furiously from window and shot-hole, but in other parts the great thickness of the walls and the vaulted roofs of apartments resisted the progress of the flames; and there the rage of man still triumphed, as the scarce more dreadful element held mastery elsewhere, for the besiegers pursued the defenders of the castle from chamber to chamber, and satiated in their blood the vengeance which had long animated them against the soldiers of the tyrant Front-de-Bœuf. Most of the garrison resisted to the uttermost; few of them asked quarter, none received it. The air was filled with groans and clashing of arms. The floors were slippery with the blood of despairing and expiring wretches.

Through this scene of confusion, Cedric rushed in quest of Rowena; while the faithful Gurth, following him closely through the *mêlée*, neglected his own safety, while he strove to avert the blows that were aimed at his master. The noble Saxon was so fortunate as to reach his ward's apartment just as she had abandoned all hope of safety, and, with a crucifix clasped in agony to her bosom, sat in expectation of instant death. He committed her to the charge of Gurth, to be conducted in safety to the barbican, the road to which was now cleared of the enemy, and not yet interrupted by the flames. This accomplished, the loyal Cedric hastened in quest of his friend Athelstane, deter-

mined, at every risk to himself, to save that last scion of Saxon royalty; but, ere Cedric penetrated as far as the old hall in which he had himself been a prisoner, the inventive genius of Wamba had procured liberation for himself and his companion in adversity.

When the noise of the conflict announced that it was at the hottest, the Jester began to shout with the utmost power of his lungs, "St. George and the Dragon! Bonny St. George for merry England! The castle is won!" And these sounds he rendered yet more fearful by banging against each other two or three pieces of rusty armor which lay scattered around the hall.

A guard, which had been stationed at the outer or ante room, and whose spirits were already in a state of alarm, took fright at Wamba's clamor, and, leaving the door open behind them, ran to tell the Templar that foemen had entered the old hall. Meantime the prisoners found no difficulty in making their escape into the anteroom, and from thence into the court of the castle, which was now the last scene of contest. Here sat the fierce Templar mounted on horseback, surrounded by several of the garrison both on horse and foot, who had united their strength to that of this renowned leader, in order to secure the last chance of safety and retreat which remained to them. The drawbridge had been lowered by his orders, but the passage was beset; for the archers, who had hitherto only annoyed the castle on that side by their missiles, no sooner saw the flames breaking out, and the bridge lowered, than they thronged to the entrance, as well to prevent the escape of the garrison as to secure their own share of booty ere the castle should be burned down. On the other hand, a party of the besiegers who had entered by the postern were now issuing out into the courtyard, and attacking with fury the remnant of the defenders, who were thus assaulted on both sides at once.

Animated, however, by despair, and supported by the example of their indomitable leader, the remaining soldiers of the castle fought with the utmost valor, and, being well armed, succeeded more than once in driving back the assailants, though much inferior in numbers. Rebecca, placed on horseback before one of

the Templar's Saracen slaves, was in the midst of the little party; and Bois-Guilbert, notwithstanding the confusion of the bloody fray, showed every attention to her safety. Repeatedly he was by her side, and, neglecting his own defense, held before her the fence of his triangular steel-plated shield; and, anon starting from his position by her, he cried his war-cry, dashed forward, struck to earth the most forward of the assailants, and was on the same instant once more at her bridle rein.

Athelstane, who, as the reader knows, was slothful but not cowardly, beheld the female form whom the Templar protected thus sedulously, and doubted not that it was Rowena whom the knight was carrying off, in spite of all resistance which could be offered.

"By the soul of St. Edward,"[1] he said, "I will rescue her from yonder over-proud knight, and he shall die by my hand!"

"Think what you do!" cried Wamba. "The hasty hand catches frog for fish. By my bauble, yonder is none of my Lady Rowena. See but her long, dark locks! Nay, an ye will not know black from white, ye may be leader, but I will be no follower. No bones of mine shall be broken, unless I know for whom. And you without armor, too! Bethink you, silk bonnet never kept out steel blade. Nay, then, if willful will to water, willful must drench.[2] *Deus vobiscum*, most doughty Athelstane!" he concluded, loosening the hold which he had hitherto kept upon the Saxon's tunic.

To snatch a mace from the pavement, on which it lay beside one whose dying grasp had just relinquished it; to rush on the Templar's band, and to strike in quick succession to the right and left, leveling a warrior at each blow, — was for Athelstane's great strength, now animated with unusual fury, but the work of a single moment. He was soon within two yards of Bois-Guilbert, whom he defied in his loudest tone.

[1] See Note 1, p. 186.

[2] "If willful will," etc., i.e., if willful will go to the water, willful must drink.

"Turn, false-hearted Templar! Let go her whom thou art unworthy to touch! Turn, limb of a band of murdering and hypocritical robbers!"

"Dog!" said the Templar, grinding his teeth, "I will teach thee to blaspheme the holy Order of the Temple of Zion!" and with these words, half-wheeling his steed, he made a demi-courbette[1] towards the Saxon, and rising in his stirrups, so as to take full advantage of the descent of the horse, he discharged a fearful blow upon the head of Athelstane.

Well said Wamba that silken bonnet keeps out no steel blade. So trenchant[2] was the Templar's weapon, that it shore asunder, as it had been a willow twig, the tough and plaited handle of the mace which the ill-fated Saxon reared to parry the blow, and, descending on his head, leveled him with the earth.

"*Ha! Beau-seant!*" exclaimed Bois-Guilbert, "thus be it to the maligners of the Temple knights!" Taking advantage of the dismay which was spread by the fall of Athelstane, and calling aloud, "Those who would save themselves, follow me!" he pushed across the drawbridge, dispersing the archers who would have intercepted them. He was followed by his Saracens and five or six men-at-arms, who had mounted their horses. The Templar's retreat was rendered perilous by the number of arrows shot off at him and his party; but this did not prevent him from galloping round to the barbican, of which, according to his previous plan, he supposed it possible De Bracy might have been in possession.

"De Bracy, De Bracy!" he shouted, "art thou there?"

"I am here," replied De Bracy, "but I am a prisoner."

"Can I rescue thee?" cried Bois-Guilbert.

"No," replied De Bracy: "I have rendered me, rescue or no rescue. I will be true prisoner. Save thyself — there are hawks abroad — put the seas betwixt you and England — I dare not say more."

"Well," answered the Templar, "an thou wilt tarry there, re-

[1] A half-leap. [2] Sharp.

member I have redeemed word and glove. Be the hawks where they will, methinks the walls of the Preceptory [1] of Templestowe will be cover sufficient, and thither will I, like heron to her haunt."

Having thus spoken, he galloped off with his followers.

Those of the castle who had not gotten to horse still continued to fight desperately with the besiegers after the departure of the Templar, but rather in despair of quarter than that they entertained any hope of escape. The fire was spreading rapidly through all parts of the castle, when Ulrica, who had first kindled it, appeared on a turret in the guise of one of the ancient Furies, yelling forth a war-song, such as was of yore raised on the field of battle by the scalds [2] of the yet heathen Saxons. Her long, disheveled gray hair flew back from her uncovered head; the delight of gratified vengeance contended in her eyes with the fire of insanity; and she brandished the distaff she held in her hand as if she had been one of the fatal Sisters, who spin and abridge the thread of human life. Tradition has preserved some wild strophes of the barbarous hymn which she chanted wildly amid that scene of fire and of slaughter: —

I.

Whet the bright steel,
Sons of the White Dragon!
Kindle the torch,
Daughter of Hengist!
The steel glimmers not for the carving of the banquet.
It is hard, broad, and sharply pointed;
The torch goeth not to the bridal chamber,
It steams and glitters blue with sulphur.
Whet the steel, the raven croaks!
Light the torch, Zernebock is yelling!
Whet the steel, sons of the Dragon!
Kindle the torch, daughter of Hengist!

[1] See note, p. 351.

[2] Icelandic, *skald*. Scandinavian name for a poet, a bard. See Longfellow's Saga of King Olaf.

2.

The black cloud is low over the thane's castle,
The eagle screams — he rides on its bosom.
Scream not, gray rider of the sable cloud,
Thy banquet is prepared!
The maidens of Valhalla look forth,
The race of Hengist will send them guests.
Shake your black tresses, maidens of Valhalla,
And strike your loud timbrels for joy!
Many a haughty step bends to your halls,
Many a helmed head.

3.

Dark sits the evening upon the thane's castle,
The black clouds gather round;
Soon shall they be red as the blood of the valiant!
The destroyer of forests shall shake his red crest against them,
He, the bright consumer of palaces,
Broad waves he his blazing banner,
Red, wide, and dusky,
Over the strife of the valiant:
His joy is in the clashing swords and broken bucklers!
He loves to lick the hissing blood as it bursts warm from the wound!

4.

All must perish!
The sword cleaveth the helmet;
The strong armor is pierced by the lance;
Fire devoureth the dwelling of princes,
Engines break down the fences of the battle.
All must perish!
The race of Hengist is gone —
The name of Horsa is no more!
Shrink not then from your doom, sons of the sword!
Let your blades drink blood like wine;
Feast ye in the banquet of slaughter,
By the light of the blazing halls!
Strong be your swords while your blood is warm,

And spare neither for pity nor fear,
For vengeance hath but an hour;
Strong hate itself shall expire!
I also must perish.[1]

The towering flames had now surmounted every obstruction, and rose to the evening skies one huge and burning beacon, seen far and wide through the adjacent country. Tower after tower crashed down, with blazing roof and rafter, and the combatants were driven from the courtyard. The vanquished, of whom very few remained, scattered, and escaped into the neighboring wood. The victors, assembling in large bands, gazed with wonder, not unmixed with fear, upon the flames, in which their own ranks and arms glanced dusky red. The maniac figure of the Saxon Ulrica was for a long time visible on the lofty stand she had chosen, tossing her arms abroad with wild exultation, as if she reigned empress of the conflagration which she had raised. At length with a terrific crash the whole turret gave way, and she perished in the flames which had consumed her tyrant. An awful pause of horror silenced each murmur of the armed spectators, who for the space of several minutes stirred not a finger save to sign the cross.

The voice of Locksley was then heard, "Shout, yeomen! The den of tyrants is no more! Let each bring his spoil to our chosen place of rendezvous at the trysting-tree[2] in the Harthill

[1] These verses are intended to imitate the antique poetry of the scalds, the minstrels of the old Scandinavians,— the race, as Southey so happily terms them,

"Stern to inflict, and stubborn to endure,
Who smiled in death."

The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, after their civilization and conversion, was of a different and softer character; but in the circumstances of Ulrica, she may not be unnaturally supposed to return to the wild strains which animated her forefathers during the time of Paganism and untamed ferocity.

[2] A tree appointed as a place of meeting, hence also a place where confidences were exchanged.

Walk; for there at break of day we will make just partition among our own bands, together with our worthy allies in this great deed of vengeance."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE daylight had dawned upon the glades of the oak forest. The green boughs glittered with all their pearls of dew. The hind led her fawn from the covet of high fern to the more open walks of the greenwood; and no huntsman was there to watch or intercept the stately hart, as he paced at the head of the antlered herd.

The outlaws were all assembled around the trysting-tree in the Harthill Walk, where they had spent the night in refreshing themselves after the fatigues of the siege, some with wine, some with slumber, many with hearing and recounting the events of the day, and computing the heaps of plunder which their success had placed at the disposal of their chief.

The spoils were indeed very large; for, notwithstanding that much was consumed, a great deal of plate, rich armor, and splendid clothing, had been secured by the exertions of the dauntless outlaws, who could be appalled by no danger when such rewards were in view. Yet so strict were the laws of their society, that no one ventured to appropriate any part of the booty, which was brought into one common mass to be at the disposal of their leader.

The place of rendezvous was an aged oak; not, however, the same to which Locksley had conducted Gurth and Wamba in the earlier part of the story, but one which was the center of a silvan amphitheater, within half a mile of the demolished castle of Torquilstone. Here Locksley assumed his seat,—a throne of turf erected under the twisted branches of the huge oak,—and the silvan followers were gathered around him. He assigned to the Black Knight a seat at his right hand, and to Cedric a place upon his left.

"Pardon my freedom, noble sirs," he said, "but in these glades I am monarch, they are my kingdom; and these my wild subjects would reck but little of my power, were I, within my own dominions, to yield place to mortal man. Now, sirs, who hath seen our chaplain? Where is our curtal friar?[1] A mass amongst Christian men best begins a busy morning." No one had seen the Clerk of Copmanhurst. "Over gods forebode!" said the outlaw chief. "Who saw him since the castle was ta'en?"

"I," quoth the miller, "marked him busy about the door of a cellar."

"Now, the saints, as many as there be of them," said the captain, "forfend,[2] lest he has perished by the fall of the castle! — Away, miller! take with you enow[3] of men, seek the place where you last saw him, throw water from the moat on the scorching ruins. I will have them removed stone by stone ere I lose my curtal friar."

The numbers who hastened to execute this duty, considering that an interesting division of spoil was about to take place, showed how much the troop had at heart the safety of their spiritual father.

"Meanwhile let us proceed," said Locksley; "for when this bold deed shall be sounded abroad, the bands of De Bracy, of Malvoisin, and other allies of Front-de-Bœuf, will be in motion against us, and it were well for our safety that we retreat from the vicinity. — Noble Cedric," he said, turning to the Saxon, "that spoil is divided into two portions. Do thou make choice of that best suits thee, to recompense thy people who were partakers with us in this adventure."

"Good yeoman," said Cedric, "my heart is oppressed with sadness. The noble Athelstane of Coningsburgh is no more, — the last sprout of the sainted confessor. Hopes have perished with him which can never return. A sparkle[4] hath been quenched

[1] A friar who acted as gate-keeper of a monastery.
[2] Fend off; forbid. [3] Enough. [4] Spark.

by his blood which no human breath can again rekindle. My people, save the few who are now with me, do but tarry my presence to transport his honored remains to their last mansion. The Lady Rowena is desirous to return to Rotherwood, and must be escorted by a sufficient force. I should therefore ere now have left this place; and I waited — not to share the booty, for so help me, God and St. Withold! as neither I nor any of mine will touch the value of a liard[1] — I waited but to render my thanks to thee and to thy bold yeomen for the life and honor ye have saved."

"Nay, but," said the chief outlaw, "we did but half the work at most. Take of the spoil what may reward your own neighbors and followers."

"I am rich enough to reward them from mine own wealth," answered Cedric.

"And some," said Wamba, "have been wise enough to reward themselves: they do not march off empty-handed altogether. We do not all wear motley."

"They are welcome," said Locksley. "Our laws bind none but ourselves."

"But thou, my poor knave," said Cedric, turning about and embracing his jester, "how shall I reward thee, who feared not to give thy body to chains and death instead of mine? All forsook me when the poor fool was faithful."

A tear stood in the eye of the rough thane as he spoke, — a mark of feeling which even the death of Athelstane had not extracted, — but there was something in the half-instinctive attachment of his clown that waked his nature more keenly than even grief itself.

"Nay," said the Jester, extricating himself from his master's caress, "if you pay my service with the water of your eye, the Jester must weep for company, and then what becomes of his vocation? But, uncle, if you would indeed pleasure me, I pray you to pardon my playfellow, Gurth, who stole a week from your service to bestow it on your son."

[1] A French coin worth about six cents.

"Pardon him!" exclaimed Cedric, "I will both pardon and reward him. — Kneel down, Gurth." The swineherd was in an instant at his master's feet. "THEOW and ESNE[1] art thou no longer," said Cedric, touching him with a wand: "FOLKFREE and SACLESS[2] art thou in town and from town, and in the forest as in the field. A hide[3] of land I give to thee in my steads[4] of Walburgham, from me and mine to thee and thine aye and forever; and God's malison on his head who this gainsays!"[5]

No longer a serf, but a freeman and a landholder, Gurth sprung upon his feet, and twice bounded aloft to almost his own height from the ground.

"A smith and a file," he cried, "to do away the collar from the neck of a freeman! Noble master! doubled is my strength by your gift, and doubly will I fight for you! There is a free spirit in my breast. I am a man changed to myself and all around. — Ha, Fangs!" he continued, — for that faithful cur, seeing his master thus transported, began to jump upon him, to express his sympathy, — "knowest thou thy master still?"

"Ay," said Wamba, "Fangs and I still know thee, Gurth, though we must needs abide by the collar: it is only thou art likely to forget both us and thyself."

"I shall forget myself indeed ere I forget thee, true comrade," said Gurth; "and were freedom fit for thee, Wamba, the master would not let thee want it."

"Nay," said Wamba, "never think I envy thee, brother Gurth: the serf sits by the hall fire when the freeman must forth to the field of battle. And what saith Oldhelm of Malmsbury?[6] Better a fool at a feast than a wise man at a fray."

[1] Thrall and bondsman.

[2] A lawful freeman.

[3] In the Domesday Book and old English charters, a measure of land variously estimated at 80, 100, and 120 acres.

[4] Estates, "stead" meaning place (as in *homestead*, "the home-place").

[5] "The curse of God on him that denies this!"

[6] The poet abbot of Malmsbury Monastery, afterward Bishop of Shireburn (born about 656, died 709).

The tramp of horses was now heard, and the Lady Rowena appeared, surrounded by several riders, and a much stronger party of footmen, who joyfully shook their pikes and clashed their brown-bills for joy of her freedom. She herself, richly attired, and mounted on a dark-chestnut palfrey, had recovered all the dignity of her manner, and only an unwonted degree of paleness showed the sufferings she had undergone. Her lovely brow, though sorrowful, bore on it a cast of reviving hope for the future, as well as of grateful thankfulness for the past deliverance. She knew that Ivanhoe was safe, and she knew that Athelstane was dead. The former assurance filled her with the most sincere delight; and, if she did not absolutely rejoice at the latter, she might be pardoned for feeling the full advantage of being freed from further persecution on the only subject in which she had ever been contradicted by her guardian Cedric.

As Rowena bent her steed towards Locksley's seat, that bold yeoman, with all his followers, rose to receive her, as if by general instinct of courtesy. The blood rose to her cheeks, as, courteously waving her hand, and bending so low that her beautiful and loose tresses were for an instant mixed with the flowing mane of her palfrey, she expressed in a few but apt words her obligations and her gratitude to Locksley and her other deliverers. "God bless you, brave men!" she concluded, "God and Our Lady bless you and requite you for gallantly periling yourselves in the cause of the oppressed! If any of you should hunger, remember Rowena has food; if you should thirst, she has many a butt of wine and brown ale; and if the Normans drive ye from these walks, Rowena has forests of her own, where her gallant deliverers may range at full freedom, and never ranger ask whose arrow hath struck down the deer."

"Thanks, gentle lady," said Locksley; "thanks from my company and myself. But to have saved you requites itself. We who walk the greenwood do many a wild deed, and the Lady Rowena's deliverance may be received as an atonement."

Again bowing from her palfrey, Rowena turned to depart;

but pausing a moment while Cedric, who was to attend her, was also taking his leave, she found herself unexpectedly close by the prisoner De Bracy. He stood under a tree in deep meditation, his arms crossed upon his breast, and Rowena was in hopes that she might pass him unobserved. He looked up, however, and, when aware of her presence, a deep flush of shame suffused his handsome countenance. He stood a moment most irresolute, then, stepping forward, took her palfrey by the rein, and bent his knee before her.

"Will the Lady Rowena deign to cast an eye on a captive knight, on a dishonored soldier?"

"Sir Knight," answered Rowena, "in enterprises such as yours, the real dishonor lies not in failure, but in success."

"Conquest, lady, should soften the heart," answered De Bracy. "Let me but know that the Lady Rowena forgives, and she shall soon learn that De Bracy knows how to serve her in nobler ways."

"I forgive you, Sir Knight," said Rowena, "as a Christian, but I can never forgive the misery and desolation your madness has occasioned."

"Unloose your hold on the lady's rein," said Cedric, coming up. "By the bright sun above us, but it were shame, I would pin thee to the earth with my javelin! But be well assured, thou shalt smart, Maurice de Bracy, for thy share in this foul deed."

"He threatens safely who threatens a prisoner," said De Bracy; "but when had a Saxon any touch of courtesy?"

Then retiring two steps backward, he permitted the lady to move on.

Cedric, ere they departed, expressed his peculiar gratitude to the Black Champion, and earnestly entreated him to accompany him to Rotherwood.

"I know," he said, "that ye errant knights desire to carry your fortunes on the point of your lance, and reck not of lands or goods; but war is a changeful mistress, and a home is sometimes desirable even to the champion whose trade is wandering.

Thou hast earned one in the halls of Rotherwood, noble knight. Cedric has wealth enough to repair the injuries of fortune, and all he has is his deliverer's. Come, therefore, to Rotherwood, not as a guest, but as a son or brother."

"Cedric has already made me rich," said the knight: "he has taught me the value of Saxon virtue. To Rotherwood will I come, brave Saxon, and that speedily; but, as now, pressing matters of moment detain me from your halls. Peradventure, when I come hither, I will ask such a boon as will put even thy generosity to the test."

"It is granted ere spoken out," said Cedric, striking his ready hand into the gauntleted[1] palm of the Black Knight — "it is granted already, were it to affect half my fortune."

"Gage not thy promise so lightly," said the knight of the fetterlock; "yet well I hope to gain the boon I shall ask. Meanwhile, adieu!"

"I have but to say," added the Saxon, "that during the funeral rites of the noble Athelstane, I shall be an inhabitant of the halls of his castle of Coningsburgh: they will be open to all who choose to partake of the funeral banqueting; and — I speak in name of the noble Edith, mother of the fallen prince — they will never be shut against him who labored so bravely, though unsuccessfully, to save Athelstane from Norman chains and Norman steel."

"Ay, ay!" said Wamba, who had resumed his attendance on his master, "rare feeding there will be. Pity that the noble Athelstane cannot banquet at his own funeral! But he," continued the Jester, lifting up his eyes gravely, "is supping in Paradise, and doubtless does honor to the cheer."

"Peace, and move on!" said Cedric, his anger at this untimely jest being checked by the recollection of Wamba's recent services. Rowena waved a graceful adieu to him of the fetterlock, the Saxon bade God speed him, and on they moved through a wide glade of the forest.

[1] The gauntlet was a leather glove covered with plate metal to agree with the other parts of the armor.

They had scarce departed, ere a sudden procession moved from under the greenwood branches, swept slowly around the silvan amphitheater, and took the same direction with Rowena and her followers. The priests of a neighboring convent, in expectation of the ample donation, or *soul-scat*,[1] which Cedric had propined,[2] attended upon the car in which the body of Athelstane was laid, and sang hymns as it was sadly and slowly borne on the shoulders of his vassals to his castle of Coningsburgh, to be there deposited in the grave of Hengist, from whom the deceased derived his long descent. Many of his vassals had assembled at the news of his death, and followed the bier with all the external marks, at least, of dejection and sorrow. Again the outlaws arose, and paid the same rude and spontaneous homage to death which they had so lately rendered to beauty. The slow chant and mournful step of the priests brought back to their remembrance such of their comrades as had fallen in the yesterday's affray; but such recollections dwell not long with those who lead a life of danger and enterprise, and, ere the sound of the death-hymn had died on the wind, the outlaws were again busied in the distribution of their spoil.

"Valiant knight," said Locksley to the Black Champion, "without whose good heart and mighty arm our enterprise must altogether have failed, will it please you to take from that mass of spoil whatever may best serve to pleasure you, and to remind you of this my trysting-tree?"

"I accept the offer," said the knight, "as frankly as it is given; and I ask permission to dispose of Sir Maurice de Bracy at my own pleasure."

"He is thine already," said Locksley, "and well for him! else the tyrant had graced the highest bough of this oak, with as many of his Free Companions as we could gather, hanging thick as acorns around him. But he is thy prisoner, and he is safe, though he had slain my father."

[1] A kind of funeral fee paid the Church for a requiem for the soul.

[2] Pledged.

"De Bracy," said the knight, "thou art free. Depart! He whose prisoner thou art scorns to take mean revenge for what is past. But beware of the future, lest a worse thing befall thee! Maurice de Bracy, I say BEWARE!"

De Bracy bowed low in silence, and was about to withdraw, when the yeomen burst at once into a shout of execration and derision. The proud knight instantly stopped, turned back, folded his arms, drew up his form to its full height, and exclaimed, "Peace, ye yelping curs! who open upon a cry which ye followed not when the stag was at bay. De Bracy scorns your censure as he would disdain your applause. To your brakes and caves, ye outlawed thieves! and be silent when aught knightly or noble is but spoken within a league of your fox-earths."[1]

This ill-timed defiance might have procured for De Bracy a volley of arrows but for the hasty and imperative interference of the outlaw chief. Meanwhile the knight caught a horse by the rein; for several which had been taken in the stables of Front-de-Bœuf stood accoutered around, and were a valuable part of the booty. He threw himself upon the saddle, and galloped off through the wood.

When the bustle occasioned by this incident was somewhat composed, the chief outlaw took from his neck the rich horn and baldric which he had recently gained at the strife of archery near Ashby.

"Noble knight," he said to him of the fetterlock, "if you disdain not to grace by your acceptance a bugle which an English yeoman has once worn, this will I pray you to keep as a memorial of your gallant bearing; and if ye have aught to do, and, as happeneth oft to a gallant knight, ye chance to be hard bested in any forest between Trent and Tees,[2] wind three mots[3] upon the horn thus, *Wa-sa-hoa!* and it may well chance ye shall find helpers and rescue."

[1] Holes in the earth where foxes hide: hence any place of concealment.

[2] Trent and Tees are rivers in the northeast of England.

[3] Notes on a bugle.

He then gave breath to the bugle, and winded once and again the call which he described, until the knight had caught the notes.

"Gramercy for the gift, bold yeoman," said the knight; "and better help than thine and thy rangers would I never seek, were it at my utmost need;" and then in his turn he winded the call till all the greenwood rang.

"Well blown, and clearly," said the yeoman; "beshrew me an thou knowest not as much of woodcraft as of war! Thou hast been a striker of deer in thy day, I warrant. — Comrades, mark these three mots, — it is the call of the knight of the fetterlock, — and he who hears it and hastens not to serve him at his need, I will have him scourged out of our band with his own bowstring."

"Long live our leader!" shouted the yeomen, "and long live the Black Knight of the fetterlock! May he soon use our service, to prove how readily it will be paid!"

Locksley now proceeded to the distribution of the spoil, which he performed with the most laudable impartiality. A tenth part of the whole was set apart for the Church and for pious uses; a portion was next allotted to a sort of public treasury; a part was assigned to the widows and children of those who had fallen, or to be expended in masses for the souls of such as had left no surviving family. The rest was divided amongst the outlaws, according to their rank and merit; and the judgment of the chief, on all such doubtful questions as occurred, was delivered with great shrewdness, and received with absolute submission. The Black Knight was not a little surprised to find that men, in a state so lawless, were nevertheless among themselves so regularly and equitably governed; and all that he observed added to his opinion of the justice and judgment of their leader.

When each had taken his own proportion of the booty, and while the treasurer, accompanied by four tall yeomen, was transporting that belonging to the State to some place of concealment or of security, the portion devoted to the Church still remained unappropriated.

"I would," said the leader, "we could hear tidings of our joyous chaplain! He was never wont to be absent when meat was to be blessed, or spoil to be parted; and it is his duty to take care of these the tithes[1] of our successful enterprise. Also I have a holy brother of his a prisoner at no great distance, and I would fain have the friar to help me to deal with him in due sort. I greatly misdoubt the safety of the bluff priest."

"I were right sorry for that," said the knight of the fetterlock, "for I stand indebted to him for the joyous hospitality of a merry night in his cell. Let us to the ruins of the castle! It may be we shall there learn some tidings of him."

While they thus spoke, a loud shout among the yeomen announced the arrival of him for whom they feared, as they learned from the stentorian voice of the friar himself, long before they saw his burly person.

"Make room, my merry men!" he exclaimed — "room for your godly father and his prisoner. Cry welcome once more! — I come, noble leader, like an eagle, with my prey in my clutch." And making his way through the ring, amidst the laughter of all around, he appeared in majestic triumph, his huge partisan in one hand, and in the other a halter, one end of which was fastened to the neck of the unfortunate Isaac of York, who, bent down by sorrow and terror, was dragged on by the victorious priest, who shouted aloud, "Where is Allan-a-Dale, to chronicle me in a ballad, or if it were but a lay? By St. Hermangild, the jingling crowder is ever out of the way where there is an apt theme for exalting valor!"

"Curtal priest," said the captain, "in the name of St. Nicholas, whom hast thou got here?"

"A captive to my sword and to my lance, noble captain," replied the Clerk of Copmanhurst; "to my bow and to my halberd, I should rather say; and yet I have redeemed him by my divinity from a worse captivity. — Speak, Jew, have I not ransomed thee from Sathanas?[2] Have I not taught thee thy *credo*,

[1] The part apportioned to the Church. [2] Latin, *Satanas* ("Satan").

thy *pater*, and thine *Ave Maria?* Did I not spend the whole night in expounding of mysteries?"

"For the love of God!" ejaculated the poor Jew, "will no one take me out of the keeping of this mad — I mean this holy man?"

"How's this, Jew?" said the friar with a menacing aspect. "Dost thou recant, Jew? Bethink thee, if thou dost relapse into thine infidelity, though thou art not so tender as a suckling pig, — I would I had one to break my fast upon! — thou art not too tough to be roasted. Be conformable, Isaac, and repeat the words after me: *Ave Maria!*" —

"Nay, we will have no profanation, mad priest," said Locksley; "let us rather hear where you found this prisoner of thine."

"By St. Dunstan!" said the friar, "I found him where I sought for better ware. I did step into the cellarage to see what might be rescued there, for though a cup of burnt wine, with spice, be an evening's draught for an emperor, it were waste, methought, to let so much good liquor be mulled at once; and I caught up one runlet of sack, and was coming to call more aid among these lazy knaves, who are ever to seek when a good deed is to be done, when I was avised of a strong door. Aha! thought I, here is the choicest juice of all in this secret crypt; and the knave butler, being disturbed in his vocation, hath left the key in the door. In, therefore, I went, and found just naught besides a commodity of rusted chains and this dog of a Jew, who presently rendered himself my prisoner, rescue or no rescue. I did but refresh myself, after the fatigue of the action with the unbeliever, with one humming cup of sack, and was proceeding to lead forth my captive, when crash after crash, as with wild thunder-dint and levin-fire,[1] down toppled the masonry of an outer tower, (marry, beshrew their hands that built it not the firmer!) and blocked up the passage. The roar of one falling tower followed another. I gave up thought of life, and, deeming it a dishonor to one of my profession to pass out of this

[1] Thunder and lightning.

world in company with a Jew, I heaved up my halberd to beat his brains out; but I took pity on his gray hairs, and judged it better to lay down the partisan and take up my spiritual weapon for his conversion. And truly, by the blessing of St. Dunstan! the seed has been sown in good soil. The Jew is converted, and understands all I have told him very nearly, if not altogether, as well as myself."

"Jew," said the captain, "is this true? Hast thou renounced thine unbelief?"

"May I so find mercy in your eyes," said the Jew, "as I know not one word which the reverend prelate spake to me all this fearful night. Alas! I was so distraught with agony and fear and grief, that, had our holy father Abraham come to preach to me, he had found but a deaf listener."

"Jew," said the friar, "I will remind thee but of one word of our conference: thou didst promise to give all thy substance to our holy order."

"So help me the promise, fair sirs!" said Isaac, even more alarmed than before, "as no such sounds ever crossed my lips. Alas! I am an aged, beggared man, I fear me a childless. Have ruth on me, and let me go!"

"Nay," said the friar, "if thou dost retract vows made in favor of Holy Church, thou must do penance."

Accordingly he raised his halberd, and would have laid the staff of it lustily on the Jew's shoulders had not the Black Knight stopped the blow, and thereby transferred the holy clerk's resentment to himself.

"By St. Thomas of Kent,"[1] said he, "an I buckle to my gear, I will teach thee, Sir Lazy Lover, to mell with thine own matters, mauger thine iron case there!"[2]

"Nay, be not wroth with me," said the knight; "thou knowest I am thy sworn friend and comrade."

[1] Thomas à Becket.

[2] "I will teach thee, Sir Lazy Lover, in spite of thy helmet, to attend to thine own business!"

"I know no such thing," answered the friar, "and defy thee for a meddling coxcomb."

"Nay, but," said the knight, who seemed to take a pleasure in provoking his quondam host, "hast thou forgotten how, that for my sake (for I say nothing of the temptation of the flagon and the pasty) thou didst break thy vow of fast and vigil?"

"Truly, friend," said the friar, clinching his huge fist, "I will bestow a buffet on thee."

"I accept of no such presents," said the knight: "I am content to take thy cuff as a loan; but I will repay thee with usury as deep as ever thy prisoner there exacted in his traffic."

"I will prove that presently," said the friar.

"Hola!" cried the captain, "what art thou after, mad friar, brawling beneath our trysting-tree?"

"No brawling," said the knight: "it is but a friendly interchange of courtesy. — Friar, strike an thou darest. I will stand thy blow if thou wilt stand mine."

"Thou hast the advantage with that iron pot on thy head," said the churchman; "but have at thee. Down thou goest, an thou wert Goliath of Gath in his brazen helmet."

The friar bared his brawny arm up to the elbow, and, putting his full strength to the blow, gave the knight a buffet that might have felled an ox. But his adversary stood firm as a rock. A loud shout was uttered by all the yeomen around; for the clerk's cuff was proverbial among them, and there were few who, in jest or earnest, had not had occasion to know its vigor.

"Now, priest," said the knight, pulling off his gauntlet, "if I had vantage[1] on my head, I will have none on my hand. Stand fast as a true man."

"*Genam meam dedi vapulatori* — I have given my cheek to the smiter," said the priest; "an thou canst stir me from the spot, fellow, I will freely bestow on thee the Jew's ransom."

So spoke the burly priest, assuming, on his part, high defiance. But who may resist his fate? The buffet of the knight was given

[1] Advantage.

with such strength and good will that the friar rolled head over heels upon the plain, to the great amazement of all the spectators. But he arose neither angry nor crestfallen.

"Brother," said he to the knight, "thou shouldst have used thy strength with more discretion. I had mumbled but a lame mass an thou hadst broken my jaw, for the piper plays ill that wants the nether chops. Nevertheless there is my hand, in friendly witness that I will exchange no more cuffs with thee, having been a loser by the barter. End now all unkindness. Let us put the Jew to ransom, since the leopard will not change his spots, and a Jew he will continue to be."

"The priest," said Clement, "is not half so confident of the Jew's conversion since he received that buffet on the ear."

"Go to, knave! What, is there no respect, — all masters and no men? But an thou gibest more of it, thou shalt learn I can give as well as take."

"Peace, all!" said the captain. — "And thou, Jew, think of thy ransom. Thou needest not to be told that thy race are held to be accursed in all Christian communities, and trust me that we cannot endure thy presence among us. Think, therefore, of an offer, while I examine a prisoner of another cast."

"Were many of Front-de-Bœuf's men taken?" demanded the Black Knight.

"None of note enough to be put to ransom," answered the captain. "A set of hilding fellows there were, whom we dismissed to find them a new master. Enough had been done for revenge and profit. The bunch of them were not worth a cardecu.[1] The prisoner I speak of is better booty, an I may judge by his horse-gear and wearing apparel. — Here cometh the worthy prelate, as pert as a pyet."[2] And between two yeomen was brought before the silvan throne of the outlaw chief our friend Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx.

[1] An old French coin worth about thirty cents. [2] As saucy as a magpie.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE captive abbot's features and manners exhibited a whimiscal mixture of offended pride and deranged foppery and bodily terror.

"Why, how now, my masters?" said he with a voice in which all three emotions were blended. "What order is this among ye? Be ye Turks, or Christians, that handle a churchman? Know ye what it is *manus imponere in servos Domini?*[1] Ye have plundered my mails; torn my cope of curious cut lace, which might have served a cardinal. Another in my place would have been at his *excommunicabo vos*,[2] but I am placable; and if ye order forth my palfreys, release my brethren, and restore my mails, tell down with all speed an hundred crowns[3] to be expended in masses at the high altar of Jorvaulx Abbey, and make your vow to eat no venison until next Pentecost,[4] it may be you shall hear little more of this mad frolic."

"Holy father," said the chief outlaw, "it grieves me to think that you have met with such usage from any of my followers as calls for your fatherly reprehension."

"Usage!" echoed the priest, encouraged by the mild tone of the silvan leader: "it were usage fit for no hound of good race, much less for a Christian, far less for a priest, and least of all for the prior of the holy community of Jorvaulx. Here is a profane

[1] To lay hands upon the servants of the Lord.

[2] "I shall excommunicate you;" that is, shut out or expel from the Church.

[3] A silver coin worth about $1.20.

[4] A solemn Jewish festival celebrated at the close of harvest, being a solemn public thanksgiving to God for his bounties; called Pentecost because celebrated on the fiftieth (Greek, *pentecostos*) day after the second day of the Passover; also a festival (called also Whitsunday) of the Roman Catholic and other churches commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, which took place on the day of Pentecost.

and drunken minstrel, called Allan-a-Dale (*nebulo quidam*[1]), who has menaced me with corporal punishment; nay, with death itself, an I pay not down four hundred crowns of ransom to the boot of all the treasure he hath already robbed me of,—gold chains and gymmal rings[2] to an unknown value, besides what is broken and spoiled among their rude hands, such as my pouncet-box[3] and silver crisping-tongs."[4]

"It is impossible that Allan-a-Dale can have thus treated a man of your reverend bearing," replied the captain.

"It is as true as the gospel of St. Nicodemus,"[5] said the prior. "He swore, with many a cruel north-country oath, that he would hang me up on the highest tree in the greenwood."

"Did he so in very deed? Nay, then, reverend father, I think you had better comply with his demands, for Allan-a-Dale is the very man to abide by his word when he has so pledged it."

"You do but jest with me," said the astounded prior with a forced laugh; "and I love a good jest with all my heart. But, ha, ha, ha! when the mirth has lasted the livelong night, it is time to be grave in the morning."

"And I am as grave as a father confessor," replied the outlaw. "You must pay a round ransom, Sir Prior, or your convent is likely to be called to a new election, for your place will know you no more."

"Are ye Christians," said the prior, "and hold this language to a churchman?"

"Christians! Ay, marry are we," answered the outlaw. "Let our buxom chaplain stand forth, and expound to this reverend father the texts which concern this matter."

The friar had huddled a friar's frock over his green cassock;

[1] A certain worthless wretch.

[2] Rings interlocked, forming a kind of double ring.

[3] Powder-box.

[4] Tongs for curling.

[5] A Pharisee, and ruler of the Jews, whose conversation with Christ (John iii. 1) revealed one of the great doctrines of Christianity,—regeneration by the spirit of God.

and now, summoning together whatever scraps of learning he had acquired by rote in former days, "Holy father," said he, "*Deus faciat salvam benignitatem vestram!*[1] you are welcome to the greenwood."

"What profane mummery is this?" said the prior. "Friend, if thou be'st indeed of the Church, it were a better deed to show me how I may escape from these men's hands than to stand ducking and grinning here like a morris-dancer."[2]

"Truly, reverend father," said the friar, "I know but one mode in which thou mayest escape. This is St. Andrew's Day with us. We are taking our tithes."

"But not of the Church, then, I trust, my good brother?" said the prior.

"Of Church and lay," said the friar; "and therefore, Sir Prior, *facite vobis amicos de Mammone iniquitatis*,—make yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, for no other friendship is like to serve your turn."

"I love a jolly woodsman at heart," said the prior, softening his tone. "Come, ye must not deal too hard with me. I can[3] well of woodcraft, and can wind a horn clear and lustily, and hollo till every oak rings again. Come, ye must not deal too hard with me."

"Give him a horn," said the outlaw: "we will prove the skill he boasts of."

The Prior Aymer winded a blast accordingly. The captain shook his head.

"Sir Prior," he said, "thou blowest a merry note, but it may not ransom thee. We cannot afford, as the legend on a good knight's shield hath it, to set thee free for a blast. Moreover, I have found thee: thou art one of those who, with new French graces and Tra-li-ras, disturb the ancient English bugle notes.

[1] "May God preserve your goodness!"

[2] A dancer, grotesquely dressed, who took part in pageants, May-day games, etc.

[3] Understand.

Prior, that last flourish on the recheat hath added fifty crowns to thy ransom, for corrupting the true old manly blasts of venerie." [1]

"Well, friend," said the abbot peevishly, "thou art ill to please with thy woodcraft. I pray thee, be more conformable in this matter of my ransom. At a word, what ransom am I to pay for walking on Watling Street without having fifty men at my back?"

"Were it not well," said the lieutenant of the gang apart to the captain, "that the prior should name the Jew's ransom, and the Jew name the prior's?"

"Thou art a mad knave," said the captain, "but thy plan transcends.[2] — Here, Jew, step forth! Look at that holy Father Aymer, prior of the rich Abbey of Jorvaulx, and tell us at what ransom we should hold him. Thou knowest the income of his convent, I warrant thee. Isaac, pronounce what he may pay, without flaying both hide and hair."

"An six hundred crowns," said Isaac, "the good prior might well pay to your honored valors, and never sit less soft in his stall."

"Six hundred crowns," said the leader gravely. "I am contented. Thou hast well spoken, Isaac. Six hundred crowns. — It is a sentence, Sir Prior."

"A sentence, a sentence!" exclaimed the band. "Solomon had not done better."

"Thou hearest thy doom, prior," said the leader.

"Ye are mad, my masters," said the prior. "Where am I to find such a sum? If I sell the very pyx[3] and candlesticks on the altar at Jorvaulx, I shall scarce raise the half; and it will be necessary, for that purpose, that I go to Jorvaulx myself. Ye may retain as borrows[4] my two priests."

[1] Hunting. [2] Is admirable.

[3] A vessel in which the consecrated bread for Communion is kept.

[4] Pledges: hence our word "to borrow," because we pledge ourselves to restore what is lent.

"That will be but blind trust," said the outlaw. "We will retain thee, prior, and send them to fetch thy ransom. Thou shalt not want a cup of wine and a collop[1] of venison the while; and, if thou lovest woodcraft, thou shalt see such as your north country never witnessed."

"Or, if so please you," said Isaac, willing to curry favor with the outlaws, "I can send to York for the six hundred crowns, out of certain moneys in my hands, if so be that the most reverend prior present will grant me a quittance."

"He shall grant thee whatever thou dost list, Isaac," said the captain; "and thou shalt lay down the redemption money for Prior Aymer as well as for thyself."

"For myself! Ah! courageous sirs," said the Jew, "I am a broken and impoverished man. A beggar's staff must be my portion through life, supposing I were to pay you fifty crowns."

"The prior shall judge of that matter," replied the captain.—"How say you, Father Aymer? Can the Jew afford a good ransom?"

"*Can* he afford a ransom?" answered the prior. "Is he not Isaac of York, rich enough to redeem the captivity of the ten[2] tribes of Israel who were led into Assyrian bondage? I have seen but little of him myself; but our cellarer and treasurer have dealt largely with him, and report says that his house at York is so full of gold and silver as is a shame in any Christian land."

"Hold, father," said the Jew, "mitigate and assuage your choler. I pray of your reverence to remember that I force my moneys upon no one. But when churchman and layman, prince and prior, knight and priest, come knocking to Isaac's door, they

[1] A piece; a slice.

[2] The twelve tribes were one people until after the death of Solomon, when ten of them revolted and became a separate monarchy under Jeroboam, called Israel; while the tribes of Benjamin and Judah under Rehoboam became the kingdom of Judah. After a series of wars between Judah and Israel, and between them and other nations, covering a period of two hundred and fifty years, the kingdom of Israel was overwhelmed, and the ten revolted tribes were carried captive into Assyria (2 Kings xvii.).

borrow not his shekels with these uncivil terms. It is then, 'Friend Isaac, will you pleasure us in this matter, and our day shall be truly kept?' and 'Kind Isaac, if ever you served man, show yourself a friend in this need.' And when the day comes, and I ask my own, then what hear I but 'Jew,' and 'The curse of Egypt on your tribe,' and all that may stir up the rude and uncivil populace against poor strangers!"

"Prior," said the captain, "Jew though he is, he hath in this spoken well. Do thou, therefore, name his ransom, as he named thine, without further rude terms."

"None but *latro famosus*[1] — the interpretation whereof," said the prior, "will I give at some other time and tide — would place a Christian prelate and an unbaptized Jew upon the same bench. But since ye require me to put a price upon this caitiff, I tell you openly that ye will wrong yourselves if ye take from him a penny under a thousand crowns."

"A sentence, a sentence!" said the chief outlaw.

"A sentence, a sentence!" shouted his assessors. "The Christian has shown his good nurture, and dealt with us more generously than the Jew."

"The God of my fathers help me!" said the Jew. "Will ye bear to the ground an impoverished creature? I am this day childless, and will ye deprive me of the means of livelihood?"

"Thou wilt have the less to provide for, Jew, if thou art childless," said Aymer.

"Alas! my lord," said Isaac, "your law permits you not to know how the child of our bosom is entwined with the strings of our heart. — O Rebecca! daughter of my beloved Rachel! were each leaf on that tree a zecchin, and each zecchin mine own, all that mass of wealth would I give to know whether thou art alive, and escaped the hands of the Nazarene!"

"Was not thy daughter dark-haired?" said one of the outlaws; "and wore she not a veil of twisted sendal, broidered with silver?"

[1] An infamous robber.

"She did, she did!" said the old man, trembling with eagerness, as formerly with fear. "The blessing of Jacob be upon thee! canst thou tell me aught of her safety?"

"It was she, then," said the yeoman, "who was carried off by the proud Templar when he broke through our ranks on yester-even. I had drawn my bow to send a shaft after him, but spared him even for the sake of the damsel, who I feared might take harm from the arrow."

"Oh!" answered the Jew, "I would to God thou hadst shot, though the arrow had pierced her bosom! Ichabod, Ichabod! the glory hath departed from my house."

"Friends," said the chief, looking round, "the old man is but a Jew, natheless[1] his grief touches me. — Deal uprightly with us, Isaac. Will paying this ransom of a thousand crowns leave thee altogether penniless?"

Isaac, recalled to think of his worldly goods, the love of which, by dint of inveterate habit, contended even with his parental affection, grew pale, stammered, and could not deny there might be some small surplus.

"Well, go to! What though there be?" said the outlaw: "we will not reckon with thee too closely. Without treasure thou mayest as well hope to redeem thy child from the clutches of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert as to shoot a stag-royal with a headless shaft. We will take thee at the same ransom with Prior Aymer, or rather at one hundred crowns lower, which hundred crowns shall be mine own peculiar loss, and not light upon this worshipful community; and so we shall avoid the heinous offense of rating a Jew merchant as high as a Christian prelate, and thou wilt have six hundred crowns remaining to treat for thy daughter's ransom. Templars love the glitter of silver shekels as well as the sparkle of black eyes. Hasten to make thy crowns chink in the ear of De Bois-Guilbert, ere worse comes of it. Thou wilt find him, as our scouts have brought notice, at the next preceptory house of his order. — Said I well, my merry mates?"

[1] Nevertheless.

The yeomen expressed their wonted acquiescence in their leader's opinion; and Isaac, relieved of one half of his apprehensions by learning that his daughter lived, and might possibly be ransomed, threw himself at the feet of the generous outlaw, and, rubbing his beard against his buskins, sought to kiss the hem of his green cassock. The captain drew himself back and extricated himself from the Jew's grasp not without some marks of contempt.

"Nay, beshrew thee, man, up with thee! I am English-born, and love no such Eastern prostrations. Kneel to God, and not to a poor sinner like me. Advise thee well, Isaac, what thou wilt do in this matter. I am intimately acquainted with the very iron chest in which thou dost keep thy money-bags. What! know I not the great stone beneath the apple-tree that leads into the vaulted chamber under thy garden at York?" The Jew grew as pale as death. "But fear nothing from me," continued the yeoman, "for we are of old acquainted. Dost thou not remember the sick yeoman whom thy fair daughter Rebecca redeemed from the gyves at York, and kept him in thy house till his health was restored, when thou didst dismiss him recovered, and with a piece of money? Usurer as thou art, thou didst never place coin at better interest than that poor silver mark, for it has this day saved thee five hundred crowns."

"And thou art he whom we called Diccon Bend-the-Bow?" said Isaac. "I thought ever I knew the accent of thy voice."

"I am Bend-the-Bow," said the captain, "and Locksley, and have a good name besides all these."

"But thou art mistaken, good Bend-the-Bow, concerning that same vaulted apartment. So help me, Heaven, as there is naught in it but some merchandise, which I will gladly part with to you, — one hundred yards of Lincoln green to make doublets to thy men, and a hundred staves of Spanish yew[1] to make bows, and one hundred silken bowstrings, tough, round, and sound. These

[1] An evergreen tree allied to the pine. The wood is tough and very elastic, and especially serviceable for bows.

will I send thee for thy good will, honest Diccon, an thou wilt keep silence about the vault, my good Diccon."

"Silent as a dormouse," said the outlaw; "and never trust me but I am grieved for thy daughter. But I may not help it. The Templars' lances are too strong for my archery in the open field: they would scatter us like dust. Had I but known it was Rebecca when she was borne off, something might have been done; but now thou must needs proceed by policy. Come, shall I treat for thee with the prior?"

"In God's name, Diccon, an thou canst, aid me to recover the child of my bosom!"

"Do not thou interrupt me with thine ill-timed avarice," said the outlaw, "and I will deal with him in thy behalf."

He then turned from the Jew, who followed him, however, as closely as his shadow.

"Prior Aymer," said the captain, "come apart with me under this tree. Men say thou hatest not a purse of gold; but I have never heard that thou didst love oppression or cruelty. Now, here is Isaac willing to give thee one hundred marks of silver, if thy intercession with thine ally the Templar shall avail to procure the freedom of his daughter. What say you to this my purpose, Prior Aymer?"

"The matter," quoth the prior, "is of a mixed condition; for, if I do a good on the one hand, yet on the other it goeth to the vantage of a Jew, and in so much is against my conscience. Yet, if the Israelite will advantage the Church by giving me somewhat over to the building of our dortour,[1] I will take it on my conscience to aid him in the matter of his daughter."

"For a score of marks to the dortour," said the outlaw, — "be still, I say, Isaac! — or for a brace of silver candlesticks to the altar, we will not stand with you."

"Nay, but good Diccon Bend-the-Bow," said Isaac, endeavoring to interpose.

"Good Jew," said the yeoman, losing patience, "an thou dost

[1] Dormitory.

go on to put thy filthy lucre in the balance with thy daughter's life, by Heaven, I will strip thee of every maravedi[1] thou hast in the world, before three days are out!"

Isaac shrunk together, and was silent.

"And what pledge am I to have for all this!" said the prior.

"When Isaac returns successful through your mediation," said the outlaw, "I swear by St. Hubert, I will see that he pays thee the money in good silver, or I will reckon with him for it in such sort he had better have paid twenty such sums."

"Well, then, Jew," said Aymer, "since I must needs meddle in this matter, let me have the use of thy writing-tablets — though, hold! rather than use thy pen, I would fast for twenty-four hours; and where shall I find one?"

"If your holy scruples can dispense with using the Jew's tablets, for the pen I can find a remedy," said the yeoman; and, bending his bow, he aimed his shaft at a wild goose which was soaring over their heads, the advanced guard of a phalanx of his tribe, which were winging their way to the distant and solitary fens of Holderness. The bird came fluttering down transfixed with the arrow.

"There, prior," said the captain, "are quills enow to supply all the monks of Jorvaulx for the next hundred years, an they take not to writing chronicles."

The prior sat down, and at great leisure indited an epistle to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and, having carefully sealed up the tablets, delivered them to the Jew, saying, "This will be thy safe-conduct to the Preceptory of Templestowe, and, as I think, is most likely to accomplish the delivery of thy daughter, if it be well backed with proffers of advantage and commodity at thine own hand; for, trust me well, the good knight Bois-Guilbert is of their confraternity that do naught for naught."

"Well, prior," said the outlaw, "I will detain thee no longer here than to give the Jew a quittance for the five hundred crowns at which thy ransom is fixed. I accept of him for my paymas-

[1] A small Spanish copper coin worth about three mills of our money.

ter; and if I hear that ye boggle[1] at allowing him in his accompts[2] the sum so paid by him, St. Mary refuse me, an I burn not the abbey over thine head, though I hang ten years the sooner!"

With a much worse grace than that wherewith he had penned the letter to Bois-Guilbert, the prior wrote an acquittance, discharging Isaac of York of five hundred crowns, advanced to him in his need for acquittal of his ransom, and faithfully promising to hold true compt[3] with him for that sum.

"And now," said Prior Aymer, "I will pray you of restitution of my mules and palfreys, and the freedom of the reverend brethren attending upon me, and also of the gymmal rings, jewels, and fair vestures, of which I have been despoiled, having now satisfied you for my ransom as a true prisoner."

"Touching your brethren, Sir Prior," said Locksley, "they shall have present freedom: it were unjust to detain them. Touching your horses and mules, they shall also be restored, with such spending money as may enable you to reach York, for it were cruel to deprive you of the means of journeying."

The prior at length, being joined by his attendants, rode off with considerably less pomp than he had exhibited before this rencounter.

It remained that the Jew should produce some security for the ransom which he was to pay on the prior's account, as well as upon his own. He gave, accordingly, an order sealed with his signet, to a brother of his tribe at York, requiring him to pay to the bearer the sum of a thousand crowns, and to deliver certain merchandises specified in the note.

Yet ere Isaac departed, the outlaw chief bestowed on him this parting advice: "Be liberal of thine offers, Isaac, and spare not thy purse for thy daughter's safety. Credit me that the gold thou shalt spare in her cause will hereafter give thee as much agony as if it were poured molten down thy throat."

Isaac acquiesced with a deep groan, and set forth on his jour-

[1] Stop as if in doubt; hesitate. [2] Accounts. [3] Reckoning.

ney, accompanied by two tall foresters, who were to be his guides, and at the same time his guards, through the wood.

The Black Knight, who had seen with no small interest these various proceedings, now took his leave of the outlaw in turn; nor could he avoid expressing his surprise at having witnessed so much civil policy amongst persons cast out from all the ordinary protection and influence of the laws.

Thus parted that fair fellowship; and he of the fetterlock, mounting upon his strong war-horse, rode off through the forest.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THERE was brave feasting in the Castle of York, to which Prince John had invited those nobles, prelates, and leaders by whose assistance he hoped to carry through his ambitious projects upon his brother's throne. Waldemar Fitzurse, his able and politic agent, was at secret work among them, tempering all to that pitch of courage which was necessary in making an open declaration of their purpose. But their enterprise was delayed by the absence of more than one main limb of the confederacy. The stubborn and daring though brutal courage of Front-de-Bœuf; the buoyant spirits and bold bearing of De Bracy; the sagacity, martial experience, and renowned valor of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, — were important to the success of their conspiracy; and, while cursing in secret their unnecessary and unmeaning absence, neither John nor his adviser dared to proceed without them. Isaac the Jew seemed also to have vanished, and with him the hope of certain sums of money, making up the subsidy for which Prince John had contracted with that Israelite and his brethren. This deficiency was likely to prove perilous in an emergency so critical.

It was on the morning after the fall of Torquilstone that a confused report began to spread abroad in the city of York, that

De Bracy and Bois-Guilbert, with their confederate Front-de-Bœuf, had been taken or slain. Waldemar brought the rumor to Prince John, announcing that he feared its truth, the more that they had set out with a small attendance, for the purpose of committing an assault on the Saxon Cedric and his attendants. At another time the prince would have treated this deed of violence as a good jest; but, now that it interfered with and impeded his own plans, he exclaimed against the perpetrators, and spoke of the broken laws, and the infringement of public order and of private property, in a tone which might have become King Alfred.

"The unprincipled marauders!" he said. "Were I ever to become monarch of England, I would hang such transgressors over the drawbridges of their own castles."

"But to become monarch of England," said his Ahithophel[1] coolly, "it is necessary not only that your Grace should endure the transgressions of these unprincipled marauders, but that you should afford them your protection, notwithstanding your laudable zeal for the laws they are in the habit of infringing. We shall be finely helped if the churl Saxons should have realized your Grace's vision of converting feudal drawbridges into gibbets; and yonder bold-spirited Cedric seemeth one to whom such an imagination might occur. Your Grace is well aware it will be dangerous to stir without Front-de-Bœuf, De Bracy, and the Templar; and yet we have gone too far to recede with safety."

Prince John struck his forehead with impatience, and then began to stride up and down the apartment.

"The villains!" he said, "the base, treacherous villains, to desert me at this pinch!"

"Nay, say rather the feather-pated, giddy madmen," said Waldemar, "who must be toying with follies when such business was on hand."

"What is to be done?" said the prince, stopping short before Waldemar.

[1] David's counselor (see 2 Sam xv. 12, and xvii. 23).

"I know nothing which can be done," answered his counselor, "save that which I have already taken order for. I came not to bewail this evil chance with your Grace until I had done my best to remedy it."

"Thou art ever my better angel, Waldemar," said the prince; "and when I have such a chancellor to advise, withal, the reign of John will be renowned in our annals. What hast thou commanded?"

"I have ordered Louis Winkelbrand, De Bracy's lieutenant, to cause his trumpet sound to horse, and to display his banner, and to set presently forth towards the castle of Front-de-Bœuf, to do what yet may be done for the succor of our friends."

Prince John's face flushed with the pride of a spoiled child, who has undergone what it conceives to be an insult.

"By the face of God!" he said, "Waldemar Fitzurse, much hast thou taken upon thee! and over-malapert thou wert to cause trumpet to blow or banner to be raised in a town where ourselves were in presence, without our express command."

"I crave your Grace's pardon," said Fitzurse, internally cursing the idle vanity of his patron; "but when time pressed, and even the loss of minutes might be fatal, I judged it best to take this much burden upon me, in a matter of such importance to your Grace's interest."

"Thou art pardoned, Fitzurse," said the prince gravely: "thy purpose hath atoned for thy hasty rashness. But whom have we here? De Bracy himself, by the rood! and in strange guise doth he come before us."

It was indeed De Bracy, "bloody with spurring, fiery red with speed." His armor bore all the marks of the late obstinate fray, being broken, defaced, and stained with blood in many places, and covered with clay and dust from the crest to the spur. Undoing his helmet, he placed it on the table, and stood a moment as if to collect himself before he told his news.

"De Bracy," said Prince John, "what means this? Speak, I charge thee! Are the Saxons in rebellion?"

"Speak, De Bracy!" said Fitzurse almost in the same moment with his master: "thou wert wont to be a man. Where is the Templar, where Front-de-Bœuf?"

"The Templar is fled," said De Bracy. "Front-de-Bœuf you will never see more. He has found a red grave among the blazing rafters of his own castle, and I alone am escaped to tell you."

"Cold news," said Waldemar, "to us, though you speak of fire and conflagration."

"The worst news is not yet said," answered De Bracy; and, coming up to Prince John, he uttered in a low and emphatic tone, "Richard is in England: I have seen and spoken with him."

Prince John turned pale, tottered, and caught at the back of an oaken bench to support himself, much like to a man who receives an arrow in his bosom.

"Thou ravest, De Bracy," said Fitzurse: "it cannot be."

"It is as true as truth itself," said De Bracy: "I was his prisoner, and spoke with him."

"With Richard Plantagenet, sayest thou?" continued Fitzurse.

"With Richard Plantagenet," replied De Bracy, "with Richard Cœur-de-Lion, with Richard of England."

"And thou wert his prisoner?" said Waldemar. "He is, then, at the head of a power?"

"No, only a few outlawed yeomen were around him, and to these his person is unknown. I heard him say he was about to depart from them. He joined them only to assist at the storming of Torquilstone."

"Ay," said Fitzurse, "such is indeed the fashion of Richard, — a true knight-errant he, and will wander in wild adventure, trusting the prowess of his single arm like any Sir Guy[1] or Sir Bevis,[2] while the weighty affairs of his kingdom slumber, and his own safety is endangered. What dost thou propose to do, De Bracy?"

[1] The hero of a famous English legend, reputed to have lived in the time of the Saxon king Æthelstan.

[2] A knight of romance (see Drayton's Polyolbion).

"I? I offered Richard the service of my Free Lances, and he refused them. I will lead them to Hull,[1] seize on shipping, and embark for Flanders. Thanks to the bustling times, a man of action will always find employment. And thou, Waldemar, wilt thou take lance and shield, and lay down the policies, and wend along with me, and share the fate which God sends us?"

"I am too old, Maurice, and I have a daughter," answered Waldemar.

"Give her to me, Fitzurse, and I will maintain her as fits her rank, with the help of lance and stirrup," said De Bracy.

"Not so," answered Fitzurse. "I will take sanctuary[2] in this church of St. Peter: the archbishop is my sworn brother."

During this discourse, Prince John had gradually awakened from the stupor into which he had been thrown by the unexpected intelligence, and had been attentive to the conversation which passed betwixt his followers. "They fall off from me," he said to himself: "they hold no more by me than a withered leaf by the bough when a breeze blows on it. Hell and fiends! Can I shape no means for myself when I am deserted by these cravens?" He paused, and there was an expression of diabolical passion in the constrained laugh with which he at length broke in on their conversation.

"Ha, ha, ha! my good lords, by the light of Our Lady's brow, I held ye sage men, bold men, ready-witted men; yet ye throw down wealth, honor, pleasure, all that our noble game promised you, at the moment it might be won by one bold cast!"

"I understand you not," said De Bracy. "As soon as Richard's return is blown abroad, he will be at the head of an army, and all is then over with us. I would counsel you, my lord,

[1] A city in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on the Humber, where it is joined by the Hull.

[2] The right of sanctuary was the privilege of immunity from arrest and punishment, granted criminals provided they remained in certain sacred places to which they had fled for refuge. Certain churches were designated as such asylums in England down to the time of the Reformation.

either to fly to France or take the protection of the Queen Mother."[1]

"I seek no safety for myself," said Prince John haughtily: "that I could secure by a word spoken to my brother. But although you, De Bracy, — and you, Waldemar Fitzurse, — are so ready to abandon me, I should not greatly delight to see your heads blackening on Clifford's Gate yonder. — Thinkest thou, Waldemar, that the wily archbishop will not suffer thee to be taken from the very horns of the altar,[2] would it make his peace with King Richard? — And forgettest thou, De Bracy, that Robert Estoteville lies betwixt thee and Hull with all his forces, and that the Earl of Essex is gathering his followers? If we had reason to fear these levies even before Richard's return, trowest thou there is any doubt now which party their leaders will take? Trust me, Estoteville alone has strength enough to drive all thy Free Lances into the Humber."[3] Waldemar Fitzurse and De Bracy looked in each other's faces with blank dismay. "There is but one road to safety," continued the prince, and his brow grew black as midnight. "This object of our terror journeys alone: he must be met, withal."

"Not by me," said De Bracy hastily. "I was his prisoner, and he took me to mercy. I will not harm a feather in his crest."

"Who spoke of harming him?" said Prince John with a hardened laugh. "The knave will say next that I meant he should slay him! No: a prison were better; and whether in Britain or Austria,[4] what matters it? Things will be but as they were when we commenced our enterprise. It was founded on

[1] Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122–1204), the daughter and heiress of the last Duke of Aquitaine, and mother of Philip, King of France.

[2] The suppliant who fled for refuge into the ancient temples grasped the horns that adorned the altar. Ecclesiastically speaking, the horns of the altar designate either corners or angles made by the ends and front of the altar.

[3] An estuary of England on the east coast, between Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

[4] Referring to Richard's captivity in the Tyrol.

the hope that Richard would remain a captive in Germany. Our uncle Robert lived and died in the castle of Cardiffe."

"Ay, but," said Waldemar, "your sire Henry[1] sate more firm in his seat than your Grace can. I say the best prison is that which is made by the sexton, — no dungeon like a church-vault! I have said my say."

"Prison or tomb," said De Bracy, "I wash my hands of the whole matter."

"Villain!" said Prince John, "thou wouldst not bewray[2] our counsel?"

"Counsel was never bewrayed by me," said De Bracy haughtily, "nor must the name of villain be coupled with mine!"

"Peace, Sir Knight!" said Waldemar; "and you, good my lord, forgive the scruples of valiant De Bracy. I trust I shall soon remove them."

"That passes your eloquence, Fitzurse," replied the knight.

"Why, good Sir Maurice," rejoined the wily politician, "start not aside like a scared steed, without at least considering the object of your terror. This Richard — but a day since, and it would have been thy dearest wish to have met him hand to hand in the ranks of battle. A hundred times have I heard thee wish it."

"Ay!" said De Bracy, "but that was, as thou sayest, hand to hand, and in the ranks of battle. Thou never heardest me breathe a thought of assaulting him alone, and in a forest."

"Thou art no good knight if thou dost scruple at it," said Waldemar. "Was it in battle that Lancelot de Lac[3] and Sir Tristram[4] won renown, or was it not by encountering gigantic knights under the shade of deep and unknown forests?"

"Ay, but I promise you," said De Bracy, "that neither Tris-

[1] Henry II., King of England, 1154–89 (see Note 2, p. 2).

[2] Betray.

[3] Lancelot of the Lake, son of King Ban of Brittany, and a renowned Knight of the Round Table.

[4] See Note 4, p. 50.

tram nor Lancelot would have been match, hand to hand, for Richard Plantagenet; and I think it was not their wont to take the odds against a single man."

"Thou art mad, De Bracy. What is it we propose to thee,— a hired and retained captain of Free Companions, whose swords are purchased for Prince John's service? Thou art apprised of our enemy, and then thou scruplest, though thy patron's fortunes, those of thy comrades, thine own, and the life and honor of every one amongst us, are at stake!"

"I tell you," said De Bracy sullenly, "that he gave me my life. True, he sent me from his presence, and refused my homage,—so far, I owe him neither favor nor allegiance,—but I will not lift hand against him."

"It needs not. Send Louis Winkelbrand and a score of thy Lances."

"Ye have sufficient ruffians of your own," said De Bracy: "not one of mine shall budge on such an errand."

"Art thou so obstinate, De Bracy?" said Prince John; "and wilt thou forsake me, after so many protestations of zeal for my service?"

"I mean it not," said De Bracy. "I will abide by you in aught that becomes a knight, whether in the lists or in the camp; but this highway practice comes not within my vow."

"Come hither, Waldemar," said Prince John. "An unhappy prince am I. My father, King Henry, had faithful servants. He had but to say that he was plagued with a fractious priest, and the blood of Thomas à Becket, saint though he was, stained the steps of his own altar.—Tracy, Morville, Brito,[1] loyal and daring subjects, your names, your spirit, are extinct! and though Reginald Fitzurse hath left a son, he hath fallen off from his father's fidelity and courage."

[1] Reginald Fitzurse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito were the gentlemen of Henry II.'s household, who, instigated by some passionate expressions of their sovereign, slew the celebrated Thomas à Becket (see note, p. 141).

"He has fallen off from neither," said Waldemar Fitzurse, "and, since it may not better be, I will take on me the conduct of this perilous enterprise. Dearly, however, did my father purchase the praise of a zealous friend; and yet did his proof of loyalty to Henry fall far short of what I am about to afford, for rather would I assail a whole calendar of saints than put spear in rest against Cœur-de-Lion. — De Bracy, to thee I must trust to keep up the spirits of the doubtful, and to guard Prince John's person. If you receive such news as I trust to send you, our enterprise will no longer wear a doubtful aspect. — Page," he said, "hie to my lodgings, and tell my armorer to be there in readiness; and bid Stephen Wetheral, Broad Thoresby, and the Three Spears of Spyinghow come to me instantly; and let the scout-master, Hugh Bardon, attend me also. — Adieu, my prince, till better times!" Thus speaking, he left the apartment.

"He goes to make my brother prisoner," said Prince John to De Bracy, with as little touch of compunction as if it but concerned the liberty of a Saxon franklin. "I trust he will observe our orders, and use our dear Richard's person with all due respect."

De Bracy only answered by a smile.

"By the light of Our Lady's brow," said Prince John, "our orders to him were most precise, though it may be you heard them not, as we stood together in the oriel window. Most clear and positive was our charge that Richard's safety should be cared for, and woe to Waldemar's head if he transgress it!"

"I had better pass to his lodgings," said De Bracy, "and make him fully aware of your Grace's pleasure; for, as it quite escaped my ear, it may not, perchance, have reached that of Waldemar."

"Nay, nay," said Prince John impatiently, "I promise thee, he heard me; and, besides, I have further occupation for thee. Maurice, come hither! Let me lean on thy shoulder."

They walked a turn through the hall in this familiar posture; and Prince John, with an air of the most confidential intimacy,

proceeded to say, "What thinkest thou of this Waldemar Fitzurse, my De Bracy? He trusts to be our chancellor. Surely we will pause ere we give an office so high to one who shows evidently how little he reverences our blood by his so readily undertaking this enterprise against Richard. Thou dost think, I warrant, that thou hast lost somewhat of our regard by thy boldly declining this unpleasing task. But no, Maurice! I rather honor thee for thy virtuous constancy. There are things most necessary to be done, the perpetrator of which we neither love nor honor; and there may be refusals to serve us which shall rather exalt in our estimation those who deny our request. The arrest of my unfortunate brother forms no such good title to the high office of chancellor as thy chivalrous and courageous denial establishes in thee to the truncheon of high marshal. Think of this, De Bracy, and begone to thy charge."

"Fickle tyrant!" muttered De Bracy, as he left the presence of the prince. "Evil luck have they who trust thee. Thy chancellor, indeed! He who hath the keeping of thy conscience shall have an easy charge, I trow. But high marshal of England! That," he said, extending his arm as if to grasp the *baton* of office, and assuming a loftier stride along the antechamber — "that is indeed a prize worth playing for."

De Bracy had no sooner left the apartment than Prince John summoned an attendant.

"Bid Hugh Bardon, our scout-master, come hither, as soon as he shall have spoken with Waldemar Fitzurse."

The scout-master arrived after a brief delay, during which John traversed the apartment with unequal and disordered steps.

"Bardon," said he, "what did Waldemar desire of thee?"

"Two resolute men, well acquainted with these northern wilds, and skillful in tracking the tread of man and horse."

"And thou hast fitted him?"

"Let your Grace never trust me else," answered the master of the spies. "One is from Hexamshire:[1] he is wont to trace

[1] A district of Northumberland.

the Tynedale and Teviotdale thieves as a bloodhound follows the slot[1] of a hurt deer. The other is Yorkshire breed, and has twanged his bowstring right oft in merry Sherwood: he knows each glade and dingle, copse and highwood, betwixt this and Richmond."[2]

"'Tis well," said the prince. "Goes Waldemar forth with them?"

"Instantly," said Bardon.

"With what attendance?" asked John carelessly.

"Broad Thoresby goes with him; and Wetheral, whom they call, for his cruelty, Stephen Steel-heart; and three northern men-at-arms that belong to Ralph Middleton's gang, they are called the Spears of Spyinghow."

"'Tis well," said Prince John, then added, after a moment's pause, "Bardon, it imports our service that thou keep a strict watch on Maurice de Bracy; so that he shall not observe it, however. And let us know of his motions from time to time, — with whom he converses, what he proposeth. Fail not in this, as thou wilt be answerable."

Hugh Bardon bowed, and retired.

"If Maurice betrays me," said Prince John — "if he betrays me, as his bearing leads me to fear, I will have his head, were Richard thundering at the gates of York."

CHAPTER XXXV.

OUR tale now returns to Isaac of York. Mounted upon a mule, the gift of the outlaw, with two tall yeomen to act as his guard and guides, the Jew had set out for the Preceptory of Templestowe for the purpose of negotiating his daughter's redemption. The preceptory was but a day's journey from the demolished castle of Torquilstone, and the Jew had hoped

[1] The track. [2] A town of Yorkshire, North Riding, on the Swale.

to reach it before nightfall. Accordingly, having dismissed his guides at the verge of the forest, and rewarded them with a piece of silver, he began to press on with such speed as his weariness permitted him to exert. But his strength failed him totally ere he had reached within four miles of the Temple Court. Racking pains shot along his back and through his limbs; and, the excessive anguish which he felt at heart being now augmented by bodily suffering, he was rendered altogether incapable of proceeding farther than a small market town, where dwelt a Jewish rabbi of his tribe, eminent in the medical profession, and to whom Isaac was well known. Nathan Ben Israel received his suffering countryman with that kindness which the law prescribed, and which the Jews practiced to each other. He insisted on his betaking himself to repose, and used such remedies as were then in most repute to check the progress of the fever, which terror, fatigue, ill usage, and sorrow had brought upon the poor old Jew.

On the morrow, when Isaac proposed to arise and pursue his journey, Nathan remonstrated against his purpose, both as his host and as his physician. It might cost him, he said, his life. But Isaac replied that more than life and death depended upon his going that morning to Templestowe.

"To Templestowe!" said his host with surprise, again felt his pulse, and then muttered to himself, "His fever is abated, yet seems his mind somewhat alienated and disturbed."

"And why not to Templestowe?" answered his patient. "I grant thee, Nathan, that it is a dwelling of those to whom the despised Children of the Promise are a stumbling-block and an abomination; yet thou knowest that pressing affairs of traffic sometimes carry us among these bloodthirsty Nazarene soldiers, and that we visit the preceptories of the Templars, as well as the commanderies of the Knights Hospitalers, as they are called."[1]

[1] Establishments of the Knights Templars were called "preceptories," and the title of those who presided in the order was "preceptor;" as the principal Knights of St. John were termed "commanders," and their houses "comman-

"I know it well," said Nathan; "but wottest thou that Lucas de Beaumanoir, the chief of their order, and whom they term Grand Master, is now himself at Templestowe?"

"I know it not," said Isaac. "Our last letters from our brethren at Paris advised us that he was at that city, beseeching Philip[1] for aid against the Sultan Saladine."[2]

"He hath since come to England, unexpected by his brethren," said Ben Israel; "and he cometh among them with a strong and outstretched arm to correct and to punish. His countenance is kindled in anger against those who have departed from the vow which they have made, and great is the fear of those sons of Belial. Thou must have heard of his name?"

"It is well known unto me," said Isaac. "The Gentiles deliver[3] this Lucas Beaumanoir as a man zealous to slaying for every point of the Nazarene law; and our brethren have termed him a fierce destroyer of the Saracens, and a cruel tyrant to the Children of the Promise."

"And truly have they termed him," said Nathan the physician. "Other Templars may be moved from the purpose of their heart by pleasure, or bribed by promise of gold and silver; but Beaumanoir is of a different stamp, despising treasure, and pressing forward to that which they call the crown of martyrdom. The God of Jacob speedily send it unto him and unto them all! Specially hath this proud man extended his glove over the children of Judah, as holy David over Edom,[4] holding the murder of a Jew to be an offering of as sweet savor as the death of a Saracen. Impious and false things has he said even of the virtues of our medicines, as if they were the devices of Satan. The Lord rebuke him!"

"Nevertheless," said Isaac, "I must present myself at Temple-

deries." These terms were sometimes used indiscriminately. Such an establishment formerly existed at Temple Newsam, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, near Leeds.

[1] Philip of France. [2] Saladin (see Note 6, p. 45). [3] Declare.

[4] A district of the Horites, south of the Dead Sea, and bordering on Moab.

stowe, though he hath made his face like unto a fiery furnace seven times heated."

He then explained to Nathan the pressing cause of his journey. The rabbi listened with interest, and testified his sympathy after the fashion of his people, rending his clothes, and saying, "Ah, my daughter! Ah, my daughter! Alas for the beauty of Zion! Alas for the captivity of Israel!"

"Thou seest," said Isaac, "how it stands with me, and that I may not tarry. Peradventure, the presence of this Lucas Beaumanoir, being the chief man over them, may turn Brian de Bois-Guilbert from the ill which he doth meditate, and that he may deliver to me my beloved daughter Rebecca."

"Go thou," said Nathan Ben Israel, "and be wise, for wisdom availed Daniel in the den of lions into which he was cast; and may it go well with thee, even as thine heart wisheth! Yet if thou canst, keep thee from the presence of the Grand Master, for to do foul scorn to our people is his morning and evening delight. It may be, if thou couldst speak with Bois-Guilbert in private, thou shalt the better prevail with him; for men say that these accursed Nazarenes are not of one mind in the preceptory. May their counsels be confounded and brought to shame! But do thou, brother, return to me as if it were to the house of thy father, and bring me word how it has sped with thee; and well do I hope thou wilt bring with thee Rebecca, even the scholar of the wise Miriam, whose cures the Gentiles slandered as if they had been wrought by necromancy."

Isaac accordingly bade his friend farewell, and about an hour's riding brought him before the Preceptory of Templestowe.

This establishment of the Templars was seated amidst fair meadows and pastures, which the devotion of the former preceptory had bestowed upon their order. It was strong and well fortified, — a point never neglected by these knights, and which the disordered state of England rendered peculiarly necessary. Two halberdiers[1] clad in black guarded the drawbridge, and

[1] Persons armed with halberds.

others in the same sad livery glided to and fro upon the wall with a funeral pace, resembling specters more than soldiers. The inferior officers of the order were thus dressed ever since their use of white garments, similar to those of the knights and esquires, had given rise to a combination of certain false brethren in the mountains of Palestine, terming themselves Templars, and bringing great dishonor on the order. A knight was now and then seen to cross the court in his long white cloak, his head depressed on his breast, and his arms folded. They passed each other, if they chanced to meet, with a slow, solemn, and mute greeting; for such was the rule of their order, quoting thereupon the holy texts, "In many words thou shalt not avoid sin," and "Life and death are in the power of the tongue." In a word, the stern, ascetic rigor of the Temple discipline, which had been so long exchanged for prodigal indulgence, seemed at once to have revived at Templestowe under the severe eye of Lucas Beaumanoir.

Isaac paused at the gate to consider how he might seek entrance in the manner most likely to bespeak favor; for he was well aware that to his unhappy race the reviving fanaticism of the order was not less dangerous than their unprincipled avarice, and that his religion would be the object of hate and persecution in the one case, as his wealth would have exposed him in the other to the extortions of unrelenting oppression.

Meantime Lucas Beaumanoir walked in a small garden belonging to the preceptory, included within the precincts of its exterior fortification, and held sad and confidential communication with a brother of his order who had come in his company from Palestine.

The Grand Master was a man advanced in age, as was testified by his long gray beard, and the shaggy gray eyebrows overhanging eyes of which, however, years had been unable to quench the fire. A formidable warrior, his thin and severe features retained the soldier's fierceness of expression; an ascetic bigot, they were no less marked by the emaciation of absti-

nence and the spiritual pride of the self-satisfied devotee. Yet with these severer traits of physiognomy there was mixed somewhat striking and noble, arising, doubtless, from the great part which his high office called upon him to act among monarchs and princes, and from the habitual exercise of supreme authority over the valiant and high-born knights, who were united by the rules of the order. His stature was tall; and his gait, undepressed by age and toil, was erect and stately. His white mantle was shaped with severe regularity, according to the rule of St. Bernard[1] himself, being composed of what was then called Burrel[2] cloth, exactly fitted to the size of the wearer, and bearing on the left shoulder the octangular cross peculiar to the order, formed of red cloth. No vair[3] or ermine[4] decked this garment; but in respect of his age, the Grand Master, as permitted by the rules, wore his doublet lined and trimmed with the softest lambskin, dressed with the wool outwards, which was the nearest approach he could regularly make to the use of fur, then the greatest luxury of dress. In his hand he bore that singular *abacus*, or staff of office, with which Templars are usually represented, having at the upper end a round plate on which was engraved the cross of the order, inscribed within a circle, or orle as heralds term it. His companion, who attended on this great personage, had nearly the same dress in all respects, but his extreme deference towards his superior showed that no other equality subsisted between them. The preceptor, for such he was in rank, walked not in a line with the Grand Master, but just so far behind that Beaumanoir could speak to him without turning round his head.

[1] A distinguished ecclesiastic, born at Fontaines near Dijon, in Burgundy, in 1091; entered the Cistercian monastery of Citeaux, 1113; abbot of Clairvaux, near Langres, 1115; active in the crusade of 1146; died at Clairvaux, Aug. 20, 1153; canonized by Pope Alexander III., 1174.

[2] A rough, coarse, russet cloth.

[3] A kind of fur, generally designating that of the gray squirrel.

[4] Valuable fur of a small quadruped of the weasel family. The term "ermine" refers especially to the white fur with the black tips of the tails arranged through it at regular intervals.

"Conrade," said the Grand Master, "dear companion of my battles and my toils, to thy faithful bosom alone I can confide my sorrows. To thee alone can I tell how oft since I came to this kingdom I have desired to be dissolved and to be with the just. Not one object in England hath met mine eye which it could rest upon with pleasure, save the tombs of our brethren, beneath the massive roof of our Temple Church in yonder proud capital. O valiant Robert de Ros! did I exclaim internally, as I gazed upon these good soldiers of the cross, where they lie sculptured on their sepulchers; O worthy William de Mareschal! open your marble cells, and take to your repose a weary brother, who would rather strive with a hundred thousand Pagans than witness the decay of our holy order!"

"It is but true," answered Conrade Mont-Fitchet — "it is but too true; and the irregularities of our brethren in England are even more gross than those in France."

"Because they are more wealthy," answered the Grand Master. "Bear with me, brother, although I should something vaunt myself. Thou knowest the life I have led, keeping each point of my order, striking down the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, like a good knight and devout priest, wheresoever I met with him, even as blessed St. Bernard hath prescribed to us in the forty-fifth capital[1] of our rule, *Ut Leo semper feriatur*.[2] But by the holy Temple! the zeal which hath devoured my substance and my life, yea, the very nerves, and marrow of my bones — by that very holy Temple, I swear to thee, that, save thyself and some few that still retain the ancient severity of our order, I look upon no brethren whom I can bring my soul to embrace under that holy name. What say our statutes, and how do our brethren observe them? They should wear no vain or worldly ornament, no crest upon their helmet, no gold upon stirrup or bridle-bit; yet who now go pranked out so proudly and so gayly as the Poor Soldiers of the Temple? They are for-

[1] Chapter.

[2] "That the lion [Satan (1 Peter, v. 8)] may always be smitten down."

bidden by our statutes to take one bird by means of another, to shoot beasts with bow or arblast, to halloo to a hunting-horn, or to spur the horse after game. But now, at hunting and hawking, and each idle sport of wood and river, who so prompt as the Templars in all these fond vanities? They are forbidden to read save what their superior permitted, or listen to what is read save such holy things as may be recited aloud during the hours of refection; but, lo! their ears are at the command of idle minstrels, and their eyes study empty romaunts.[1] They were commanded to extirpate magic and heresy. Lo! they are charged with studying the accursed cabalistical secrets of the Jews, and the magic of the Paynim[2] Saracens. Simpleness of diet was prescribed to them, roots, pottage, gruels, eating flesh but thrice a week, because the accustomed feeding on flesh is a dishonorable corruption of the body; and, behold! their tables groan under delicate fare. Their drink was to be water, and now to drink like a Templar is the boast of each jolly boon companion. This very garden, filled as it is with curious herbs and trees sent from the Eastern climes, better becomes the harem of an unbelieving emir[3] than the plot which Christian monks should devote to raise their homely pot-herbs. And oh, Conrade, well it were that the relaxation of discipline stopped even here! I shame to speak — I shame to think — of the corruptions which have rushed in upon us even like a flood. The souls of our pure founders, the spirits of Hugh de Payen and Godfrey de St. Omer, and of the blessed Seven[4] who first joined in dedicating their lives to the service of the Temple, are disturbed even in the enjoyment of Paradise itself. I have seen them, Conrade, in the visions of the

[1] Romances (compare Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose).

[2] Pagan; infidel.

[3] A Mohammedan chief or leader.

[4] Hugh de Payens and Geoffrey de St. Aldemar or St. Omer, with seven others whose names are unknown, founded the Knights Templars, or Poor Soldiers of the Temple of Solomon, in 1118 or 1119, for the defense of the Holy Sepulcher and of pilgrims. Baldwin II., King of Jerusalem, gave them a house near the site of the Temple; whence their name "Templars," or "Knights of the Temple," or "Poor Soldiers of the Temple of Solomon."

night. Their sainted eyes shed tears for the sins and follies of their brethren, and for the foul and shameful luxury in which they wallow. Beaumanoir, they say thou slumberest. Awake! There is a stain in the fabric of the Temple. Beaumanoir, thou sleepest. Up, and avenge our cause! Slay the sinners! Take to thee the brand of Phineas![1] The vision fled, Conrade; but as I awaked, I could still hear the clank of their mail, and see the waving of their white mantles. And I will do according to their word. I WILL purify the fabric of the Temple! and the unclean stones in which the plague is, I will remove and cast out of the building."

"Yet bethink thee, reverend father," said Mont-Fitchet, "the stain hath become ingrained by time and consuetude.[2] Let thy reformation be cautious, as it is just and wise."

"No, Mont-Fitchet," answered the stern old man, "it must be sharp and sudden. The order is on the crisis of its fate. The sobriety, self-devotion, and piety of our predecessors made us powerful friends: our presumption, our wealth, our luxury, have raised up against us mighty enemies. We must cast away these riches, which are a temptation to princes; we must lay down that presumption which is an offense to them; we must reform that which is a scandal to the whole Christian world; or, mark my words, the Order of the Temple will be utterly demolished, and the place thereof shall no more be known among the nations."

"Now may God avert such a calamity!" said the preceptor.

"Amen!" said the Grand Master with solemnity; "but we must deserve His aid. I tell thee, Conrade, that neither the powers in heaven nor the powers on earth will longer endure the wickedness of this generation. My intelligence is sure. The ground on which our fabric is reared is already undermined, and each addition we make to the structure of our greatness will only sink it the sooner in the abyss. We must retrace our steps, and

[1] Sword of Phinehas, grandson of Aaron, zealous for the purity and integrity of the Church.

[2] Custom.

show ourselves the faithful champions of the cross, sacrificing to our calling not alone our blood and our lives, but our ease, our comforts, and act as men convinced that many a pleasure which may be lawful to others is forbidden to the vowed soldier of the Temple."

At this moment a squire, clothed in a threadbare vestment (for the aspirants after this holy order wore during their novitiate the cast-off garments of the knights), entered the garden, and, bowing profoundly before the Grand Master, stood silent, awaiting his permission ere he presumed to tell his errand.

"Is it not more seemly," said the Grand Master, "to see this Damian, clothed in the garments of Christian humility, thus appear with reverend silence before his superior, than but two days since, when the fond fool was decked in a painted coat, and jangling as pert and as proud as any popinjay? Speak, Damian, we permit thee! What is thine errand?"

"A Jew stands without the gate, noble and reverend father," said the squire, "who prays to speak with brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"Thou wert right to give me knowledge of it," said the Grand Master. "In our presence a preceptor is but as a common compeer of our order, who may not walk according to his own will, but to that of his Master; even according to the text, 'In the hearing of the ear he hath obeyed me.'— It imports us especially to know of this Bois-Guilbert's proceedings," said he, turning to his companion.

"Report speaks him brave and valiant," said Conrade.

"And truly is he so spoken of," said the Grand Master. "In our valor only we are not degenerated from our predecessors, the heroes of the cross. But brother Brian came into our order a moody and disappointed man, stirred, I doubt me, to take our vows and to renounce the world, not in sincerity of soul, but as one whom some touch of light discontent had driven into penitence. Since then he hath become an active and earnest agitator, a murmurer, and a machinator, and a leader amongst those

who inpugn our authority; not considering that the rule is given to the Master even by the symbol of the staff and the rod,— the staff to support the infirmities of the weak, the rod to correct the faults of delinquents.— Damian," he continued, "lead the Jew to our presence."

The squire departed with a profound reverence, and in a few minutes returned, marshaling in Isaac of York. No naked slave ushered into the presence of some mighty prince could approach his judgment-seat with more profound reverence and terror than that with which the Jew drew near to the presence of the Grand Master. When he had approached within the distance of three yards, Beaumanoir made a sign with his staff that he should come no farther. The Jew kneeled down on the earth, which he kissed in token of reverence, then, rising, stood before the Templars, his hands folded on his bosom, his head bowed on his breast, in all the submission of Oriental slavery.

"Damian," said the Grand Master, "retire, and have a guard ready to await our sudden call; and suffer no one to enter the garden until we shall leave it." The squire bowed, and retreated. "Jew," continued the haughty old man, "mark me. It suits not our condition to hold with thee long communication, nor do we waste words or time upon any one: wherefore be brief in thy answers to what questions I shall ask thee, and let thy words be of truth; for if thy tongue doubles with me, I will have it torn from thy misbelieving jaws."

The Jew was about to reply, but the Grand Master went on.

"Peace, unbeliever! not a word in our presence, save in answer to our questions. What is thy business with our brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"

Isaac gasped with terror and uncertainty. To tell his tale might be interpreted into scandalizing the order; yet, unless he told it, what hope could he have of achieving his daughter's deliverance? Beaumanoir saw his mortal apprehension, and condescended to give him some assurance.

"Fear nothing," he said, "for thy wretched person, Jew, so

thou dealest uprightly in this matter. I demand again to know from thee thy business with Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"I am bearer of a letter," stammered out the Jew, "so please your reverend valor, to that good knight, from Prior Aymer of the Abbey of Jorvaulx."

"Said I not these were evil times, Conrade?" said the Master. "A Cistercian prior sends a letter to a soldier of the Temple, and can find no more fitting messenger than an unbelieving Jew. Give me the letter."

The Jew with trembling hands undid the folds of his Armenian[1] cap, in which he had deposited the prior's tablets for the greater security, and was about to approach, with hand extended and body crouched, to place it within the reach of his grim interrogator.

"Back, dog!" said the Grand Master. "I touch not misbelievers, save with the sword. — Conrade, take thou the letter from the Jew and give it to me."

Beaumanoir, being thus possessed of the tablets, inspected the outside carefully, and then proceeded to undo the pack-thread which secured its folds. "Reverend father," said Conrade, interposing, though with much deference, "wilt thou break the seal?"

"And will I not?" said Beaumanoir with a frown. "Is it not written in the forty-second capital, *De Lectione Literarum*,[2] that a Templar shall not receive a letter, no, not from his father, without communicating the same to the Grand Master, and reading it in his presence?"

He then perused the letter in haste with an expression of surprise and horror, read it over again more slowly, then holding it out to Conrade with one hand, and slightly striking it with the other, exclaimed, "Here is goodly stuff for one Christian man to write to another, and both members, and no inconsiderable mem-

[1] Armenia was an ancient country of western Asia, between Asia Minor and the Caspian Sea, now divided between Russia, Turkey, and Persia.

[2] "On the Reading of Letters."

bers, of religious professions! When," said he solemnly, and looking upward, "wilt Thou come with Thy fanners to purge the thrashing-floor?"[1]

Mont-Fitchet took the letter from his superior, and was about to peruse it. "Read it aloud, Conrade," said the Grand Master —"and do thou (to Isaac) attend to the purport of it, for we will question thee concerning it."

Conrade read the letter, which was in these words:—

Aymer, by divine grace, prior of the Cistercian house of St. Mary's of Jorvaulx, to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a knight of the holy Order of the Temple, wishes health. Touching our present condition, dear brother, we are a captive in the hands of certain lawless and godless men, who have not feared to detain our person and put us to ransom; whereby we have also learned of Front-de-Bœuf's misfortune, and that thou hast escaped with that fair Jewish sorceress. We are heartily rejoiced of thy safety; nevertheless we pray thee to be on thy guard in the matter of this second Witch of Endor, for we are privately assured that your Great Master comes from Normandy to amend your doings. Wherefore we pray you heartily to beware, and to be found watching, even as the Holy Text hath it, *Invenientur vigilantes*. And the wealthy Jew her father, Isaac of York, having prayed of me letters in his behalf, I gave him these, earnestly advising, and in a sort entreating, that you do hold the damsel to ransom, whereof I trust to have my part when we make merry together, as true brothers, not forgetting the wine-cup.

Till which merry meeting we wish you farewell. Given from this den of thieves, about the hour of matins.

AYMER PR. S. M. JORVOLCIENCIS.

Postscriptum.—Truly your golden chain hath not long abidden with me, and will now sustain, around the neck of an outlaw deer-stealer, the whistle wherewith he calleth on his hounds.

"What sayest thou to this, Conrade?" said the Grand Master.

"Den of thieves! and a fit residence is a den of thieves for such a prior. No wonder that the hand of God is upon us, and

[1] Fanners were machines for winnowing grain: hence the meaning here is to eliminate the good from the bad.

that in the Holy Land we lose place by place, foot by foot, before the infidels, when we have such churchmen as this Aymer. — And what meaneth he, I trow, by this second Witch of Endor?" said he to his confidant, something apart.

Conrade was better acquainted with the jargon of gallantry than was his superior, and he expounded the passage which embarrassed the Grand Master, but the explanation did not satisfy the bigoted Beaumanoir.

"There is more in it than thou dost guess, Conrade. Thy simplicity is no match for this deep abyss of wickedness. This Rebecca of York was a pupil of that Miriam of whom thou hast heard. Thou shalt hear the Jew own it even now." Then, turning to Isaac, he said aloud, "Thy daughter, then, is prisoner with Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"

"Ay, reverend valorous sir," stammered poor Isaac, "and whatsoever ransom a poor man may pay for her deliverance"—

"Peace!" said the Grand Master. "This thy daughter hath practiced the art of healing, hath she not?"

"Ay, gracious sir," answered the Jew with more confidence; "and knight and yeoman, squire and vassal, may bless the goodly gift which Heaven hath assigned to her. Many a one can testify that she hath recovered them by her art, when every other human aid hath proved vain; but the blessing of the God of Jacob was upon her."

Beaumanoir turned to Mont-Fitchet with a grim smile. "See, brother," he said, "the deceptions of the devouring Enemy! Well said our blessed rule, *Semper percutiatur leo vorans.* Up on the lion! Down with the destroyer!" said he, shaking aloft his mystic *abacus*, as if in defiance of the powers of darkness. "Thy daughter worketh the cures, I doubt not," thus he went on to address the Jew, "by words and sigils,[1] and periapts,[2] and other cabalistical[3] mysteries."

[1] Magical seals; talismans.

[2] Charms; amulets.

[3] See Note 2, p. 117.

"Nay, reverend and brave knight," answered Isaac, "but in chief measure by a balsam of marvelous virtue."

"Where had she that secret?" said Beaumanoir.

"It was delivered to her," answered Isaac reluctantly, "by Miriam, a sage matron of our tribe."

"Ah, false Jew!" said the Grand Master, "was it not from that same witch Miriam, the abomination of whose enchantments have been heard of throughout every Christian land?" exclaimed the Grand Master, crossing himself. "Her body was burnt at a stake, and her ashes were scattered to the four winds; and so be it with me and mine order, if I do not as much to her pupil, and more also! I will teach her to throw spell and incantation over the soldiers of the blessed Temple. There, Damian, spurn this Jew from the gate, shoot him dead if he oppose or turn again. With his daughter we will deal as the Christian law and our own high office warrant."

Poor Isaac was hurried off accordingly, and expelled from the preceptory; all his entreaties, and even his offers, unheard and disregarded. He could do no better than return to the house of the rabbi, and endeavor, through his means, to learn how his daughter was to be disposed of. Meanwhile the Grand Master ordered to his presence the Preceptor of Templestowe.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ALBERT MALVOISIN, president, or, in the language of the order, preceptor, of the establishment of Templestowe, was brother to that Philip Malvoisin who has been already occasionally mentioned in this history, and was, like that baron, in close league with Brian de Bois-Guilbert.

Amongst unprincipled men, of whom the Temple order included but too many, Albert of Templestowe might be distinguished; but with this difference from the audacious Bois-Guil-

bert, that he knew how to throw over his vices and his ambition the veil of hypocrisy, and to assume in his exterior the fanaticism which he internally despised. Had not the arrival of the Grand Master been so unexpectedly sudden, he would have seen nothing at Templestowe which might have appeared to argue any relaxation of discipline; and even although surprised, and to a certain extent detected, Albert Malvoisin listened with such respect and apparent contrition to the rebuke of his superior, and made such haste to reform the particulars he censured, — succeeded, in fine, so well in giving an air of ascetic devotion, — that Lucas Beaumanoir began to entertain a higher opinion of the preceptor's morals than the first appearance of the establishment had inclined him to adopt.

But these favorable sentiments on the part of the Grand Master were greatly shaken by the intelligence that Albert had received within a house of religion a Jewess, the captive of a brother of the order; and when Albert appeared before him, he was regarded with unwonted sternness.

"There is in this mansion, dedicated to the purposes of the holy Order of the Temple," said the Grand Master in a severe tone, "a Jewish woman, brought hither by a brother of religion, by your connivance, Sir Preceptor."

Albert Malvoisin was overwhelmed with confusion; for the unfortunate Rebecca had been confined in a remote and secret part of the building, and every precaution used to prevent her residence there from being known. He read in the looks of Beaumanoir ruin to Bois-Guilbert and to himself unless he should be able to avert the impending storm.

"Why are you mute?" continued the Grand Master.

"Is it permitted to me to reply?" answered the preceptor in a tone of the deepest humility, although by the question he only meant to gain an instant's space for arranging his ideas.

"Speak, you are permitted," said the Grand Master. "How comes it, then, I demand of thee once more, that thou hast suffered a brother to bring a Jewish sorceress into this holy place?"

"A Jewish sorceress!" echoed Albert Malvoisin. "Good angels, guard us!"

"Ay, brother, a Jewish sorceress!" said the Grand Master sternly. "I have said it. Darest thou deny that this Rebecca, the daughter of that wretched usurer Isaac of York, and the pupil of the foul witch Miriam, is now lodged within this thy preceptory?"

"Your wisdom, reverend father," answered the preceptor, "hath rolled away the darkness from my understanding. Much did I wonder at Brian de Bois-Guilbert's devotion to this Jewess. I could not but ascribe it to some touch of insanity more to be cured by pity than reproof; but, since your reverend wisdom hath discovered her to be a sorceress, perchance it may account fully for his folly."

"It doth, it doth!" said Beaumanoir. "See, brother Conrade, the Ancient Enemy,[1] the devouring Lion, obtains power over us by talisman and spell. It may be that our brother Bois-Guilbert does in this matter deserve rather pity than severe chastisement, rather the support of the staff than the strokes of the rod; and that our admonitions and prayers may turn him from his folly, and restore him to his brethren."

"It were deep pity," said Conrade Mont-Fitchet, "to lose to the order one of its best lances, when the holy community most requires the aid of its sons. Three hundred Saracens hath this Brian de Bois-Guilbert slain with his own hand."

"The blood of these accursed dogs," said the Grand Master, "shall be a sweet and acceptable offering to the saints and angels whom they despise and blaspheme; and with their aid will we counteract the spells and charms with which our brother is entwined as in a net. He shall burst the bands of this Delilah, as Samson burst the two new cords with which the Philistines had bound him, and shall slaughter the infidels, even heaps upon heaps. But concerning this foul witch, who hath flung her enchantments over a brother of the holy Temple, assuredly she shall die the death."

[1] Satan.

"But the laws of England"—said the preceptor, who, though delighted that the Grand Master's resentment, thus fortunately averted from himself and Bois-Guilbert, had taken another direction, began now to fear he was carrying it too far.

"The laws of England," interrupted Beaumanoir, "permit and enjoin each judge to execute justice within his own jurisdiction. The most petty baron may arrest, try, and condemn a witch found within his own domain; and shall that power be denied to the Grand Master of the Temple within a preceptory of his order? No: we will judge and condemn. The witch shall be taken out of the land, and the wickedness thereof shall be forgiven. Prepare the castle hall for the trial of the sorceress."

Albert Malvoisin bowed and retired,—not to give directions for preparing the hall, but to seek out Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and communicate to him how matters were likely to terminate. It was not long ere he found him, foaming with indignation. "The unthinking," he said, "the ungrateful, to scorn him who, amidst blood and flames, would have saved her life at the risk of his own! By Heaven, Malvoisin! I abode until roof and rafters crackled and crashed around me. I was the butt of a hundred arrows: they rattled on mine armor like hailstones against a latticed casement, and the only use I made of my shield was for her protection. This did I endure for her; and now the self-willed girl upbraids me that I did not leave her to perish, and refuses me not only the slightest proof of gratitude, but even the most distant hope that ever she will be brought to grant any. The devil, that possessed her race with obstinacy, has concentrated its full force in her single person!"

"The devil," said the preceptor, "I think, possessed you both. By the mass, I think old Lucas Beaumanoir guesses right, when he maintains she hath cast a spell over you."

"Lucas Beaumanoir!" said Bois-Guilbert reproachfully. "Are these your precautions, Malvoisin? Hast thou suffered the dotard to learn that Rebecca is in the preceptory?"

"How could I help it?" said the preceptor. "I neglected

nothing that could keep secret your mystery; but it is betrayed, and, whether by the devil or no, the devil only can tell. But I have turned the matter as I could: you are safe if you renounce Rebecca. You are pitied,—the victim of magical delusion. She is a sorceress, and must suffer as such."

"She shall not, by Heaven!" said Bois-Guilbert.

"By Heaven, she must and will!" said Malvoisin. "Neither you nor any one else can save her. Lucas Beaumanoir hath settled that the death of a Jewess will be an offering; and thou knowest he hath both the power and will to execute so reasonable and pious a purpose."

"Will future ages believe that such stupid bigotry ever existed!" said Bois-Guilbert, striding up and down the apartment.

"What they may believe, I know not," said Malvoisin calmly; "but I know well, that in this our day, clergy and laymen take ninety-nine to the hundred, will cry 'amen' to the Grand Master's sentence."

"I have it," said Bois-Guilbert. "Albert, thou art my friend. Thou must connive at her escape, Malvoisin, and I will transport her to some place of greater security and secrecy."

"I cannot, if I would," replied the preceptor. "The mansion is filled with the attendants of the Grand Master, and others who are devoted to him; and, to be frank with you, brother, I would not embark with you in this matter, even if I could hope to bring my bark to haven. I have risked enough already for your sake. I have no mind to encounter a sentence of degradation, or even to lose my preceptory; and you, if you will be guided by my counsel, will give up this wild-goose chase. Think, Bois-Guilbert, thy present rank, thy future honors, all depend on thy place in the order. Shouldst thou adhere perversely to this Rebecca, thou wilt give Beaumanoir the power of expelling thee, and he will not neglect it. He is jealous of the truncheon which he holds in his trembling gripe, and he knows thou stretchest thy bold hand towards it. Doubt not he will ruin thee, if thou

affordest him a pretext so fair as thy protection of a Jewish sorceress. Give him his scope in this matter, for thou canst not control him."

"Malvoisin," said Bois-Guilbert, "thou art a cold-blooded"—

"Friend," said the preceptor, hastening to fill up the blank, in which Bois-Guilbert would probably have placed a worse word —"a cold-blooded friend I am, and therefore more fit to give thee advice. I tell thee once more, that thou canst not save Rebecca. I tell thee once more, thou canst but perish with her. Go, hie thee to the Grand Master, throw thyself at his feet, and tell him"—

"Thou speakest the truth, Malvoisin," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert after a moment's reflection. "I will cast her off! Yes, I will leave her to her fate, unless"—

"Qualify not thy wise and necessary resolution," said Malvoisin. "For the present we part, nor must we be seen to hold close conversation. I must order the hall for his judgment-seat."

"What!" said Bois-Guilbert, "so soon?"

"Ay," replied the preceptor, "trial moves rapidly on when the judge has determined the sentence beforehand."

"Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert when he was left alone, "one effort will I make to save thee; but beware of ingratitude!"

The preceptor had hardly given the necessary orders, when he was joined by Conrade Mont-Fitchet, who acquainted him with the Grand Master's resolution to bring the Jewess to instant trial for sorcery.

"It is surely a dream," said the preceptor. "We have many Jewess physicians, and we call them not wizards, though they work wonderful cures."

"The Grand Master thinks otherwise," said Mont-Fitchet; "and, Albert, I will be upright with thee: wizard or not, it were better that this miserable damsel die than that Brian de Bois-Guilbert should be lost to the order, or the order divided by internal dissension. Thou knowest his high rank, his fame in

arms; thou knowest the zeal with which many of our brethren regard him."

"I have been working him even now to abandon her," said Malvoisin; "but still, are there grounds enough to condemn this Rebecca for sorcery? Will not the Grand Master change his mind when he sees that the proofs are so weak?"

"They must be strengthened, Albert," replied Mont-Fitchet, "they must be strengthened. Dost thou understand me?"

"I do," said the preceptor, "nor do I scruple to do aught for advancement of the order; but there is little time to find engines fitting."

"Malvoisin, they *must* be found," said Conrade: "well will it advantage both the order and thee. This Templestowe is a poor preceptory: that of Maison-Dieu is worth double its value. Thou knowest my interest with our old chief. Find those who can carry this matter through, and thou art preceptor of Maison-Dieu in the fertile Kent.[1] How sayest thou?"

"There are," replied Malvoisin, "among those who came hither with Bois-Guilbert, two fellows whom I well know. Servants they were to my brother Philip de Malvoisin, and passed from his service to that of Front-de-Bœuf. It may be they know something of the witcheries of this woman."

"Away! Seek them out instantly! and hark thee, if a byzant or two will sharpen their memory, let them not be wanting."

"They would swear any one a sorceress for a zecchin," said the preceptor.

"Away, then!" said Mont-Fitchet. "At noon the affair will proceed. I have not seen our senior in such earnest preparation since he condemned to the stake Hamet Alfagi, a convert who relapsed to the Moslem faith."

The ponderous castle-bell had tolled the point of noon, when Rebecca heard a trampling of feet upon the private stair which led to her place of confinement. The noise announced the arrival of several persons. The door of the chamber was un-

[1] A county forming the southeastern extremity of England.

locked, and Conrade and the preceptor Malvoisin entered, attended by four warders clothed in black, and bearing halberds.

"Daughter of an accursed race!" said the preceptor, "arise and follow us."

"Whither," said Rebecca, "and for what purpose?"

"Damsel," answered Conrade, "it is not for thee to question, but to obey. Nevertheless, be it known to thee that thou art to be brought before the tribunal of the Grand Master of our holy order, there to answer for thine offenses."

"May the God of Abraham be praised!" said Rebecca, folding her hands devoutly. "The name of a judge, though an enemy to my people, is to me as the name of a protector. Most willingly do I follow thee: permit me only to wrap my veil around my head."

They descended the stair with slow and solemn step, traversed a long gallery, and, by a pair of folding-doors placed at the end, entered the great hall in which the Grand Master had for the time established his court of justice.

The lower part of this ample apartment was filled with squires and yeomen, who made way, not without some difficulty, for Rebecca (attended by the preceptor and Mont-Fitchet, and followed by the guard of halberdiers) to move forward to the seat appointed for her. As she passed through the crowd, her arms folded and her head depressed, a scrap of paper was thrust into her hand, which she received almost unconsciously, and continued to hold without examining its contents. The assurance that she possessed some friend in this awful assembly gave her courage to look around, and to mark into whose presence she had been conducted.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE tribunal, erected for the trial of the innocent and unhappy Rebecca, occupied the dais or elevated part of the upper end of the great hall, — a platform, which we have already described as the place of honor, destined to be occupied by the most distinguished inhabitants or guests of an ancient mansion.

On an elevated seat, directly before the accused, sat the Grand Master of the Temple, in full and ample robes of flowing white, holding in his hand the mystic staff, which bore the symbol of the order. At his feet was placed a table, occupied by two scribes, chaplains of the order, whose duty it was to reduce to formal record the proceedings of the day. The black dresses, bare scalps, and demure looks of these churchmen formed a strong contrast to the warlike appearance of the knights who attended, either as residing in the preceptory or as come thither to attend upon their Grand Master. The preceptors, of whom there were four present, occupied seats lower in height, and somewhat drawn back behind that of their superior; and the knights, who enjoyed no such rank in the order, were placed on benches still lower, and preserving the same distance from the preceptors as these from the Grand Master. Behind them, but still upon the dais or elevated portion of the hall, stood the esquires of the order, in white dresses of an inferior quality.

The whole assembly wore an aspect of the most profound gravity; and in the faces of the knights might be perceived traces of military daring, united with the solemn carriage becoming men of religious profession, and which, in the presence of their Grand Master, failed not to sit upon their brow.

The remaining and lower part of the hall was filled with guards, holding partisans, and with other attendants whom curiosity had drawn thither to see at once a Grand Master and a Jewish sorceress. By far the greater part of those inferior persons were, in one rank or other, connected with the order,

and were accordingly distinguished by their black dresses. But peasants from the neighboring country were not refused admittance; for it was the pride of Beaumanoir to render the edifying spectacle of the justice which he administered as public as possible. His large blue eyes seemed to expand as he gazed around the assembly, and his countenance appeared elated by the conscious dignity and imaginary merit of the part which he was about to perform. A psalm, which he himself accompanied with a deep mellow voice, which age had not deprived of its powers, commenced the proceedings of the day; and the solemn sounds, *Venite exultemus Domino*,[1] so often sung by the Templars before engaging with earthly adversaries, was judged by Lucas most appropriate to introduce the approaching triumph, for such he deemed it, over the powers of darkness. The deep, prolonged notes, raised by a hundred masculine voices accustomed to combine in the choral chant, arose to the vaulted roof of the hall, and rolled on amongst its arches with the pleasing yet solemn sound of the rushing of mighty waters.

When the sound ceased, the Grand Master glanced his eye slowly around the circle, and observed that the seat of one of the preceptors was vacant. Brian de Bois-Guilbert, by whom it had been occupied, had left his place, and was now standing near the extreme corner of one of the benches occupied by the Knights Companions of the Temple, one hand extending his long mantle, so as in some degree to hide his face; while the other held his cross-handled sword, with the point of which, sheathed as it was, he was slowly drawing lines upon the oaken floor.

"Unhappy man!" said the Grand Master, after favoring him with a glance of compassion. "Thou seest, Conrade, how this holy work distresses him. Seest thou he cannot look upon us; he cannot look upon her; and who knows by what impulse from his tormentor his hand forms these cabalistic lines upon the floor? It may be our life and safety are thus aimed at; but we spit at and defy the foul enemy. *Semper Leo percutiatur!*"

[1] "Come, let us rejoice exceedingly in the Lord!"

This was communicated apart to his confidential follower, Conrade Mont-Fitchet. The Grand Master then raised his voice, and addressed the assembly.

"Reverend and valiant men, knights, preceptors, and companions of this holy order, my brethren and my children! — you also, well-born and pious esquires, who aspire to wear this holy cross! — and you also, Christian brethren, of every degree! — Be it known to you, that it is not defect of power in us which hath occasioned the assembling of this congregation; for, however unworthy in our person, yet to us is committed, with this batoon,[1] full power to judge and to try all that regards the weal of this our holy order. Holy St. Bernard, in the rule of our knightly and religious profession, hath said, in the fifty-ninth capital,[2] that he would not that brethren be called together in council, save at the will and command of the Master; leaving it free to us, as to those more worthy fathers who have preceded us in this our office, to judge, as well of the occasion as of the time and place in which a chapter of the whole order, or of any part thereof, may be convoked. Also, in all such chapters, it is our duty to hear the advice of our brethren, and to proceed according to our own pleasure. But when the raging wolf hath made an inroad upon the flock, and carried off one member thereof, it is the duty of the kind shepherd to call his comrades together, that with bows and slings they may quell the invader, according to our well-known rule, that the lion is ever to be beaten down. We have therefore summoned to our presence a Jewish woman, by name Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York, — a woman infamous for sortileges[3] and for witcheries; whereby she hath maddened not a churl, but a knight — not a secular knight, but one devoted to the service of the holy Temple — not

[1] Baton, emblem of office.

[2] The reader is again referred to the rules of the Poor Military Brotherhood of the Temple, which occur in the works of St. Bernard.

[3] The art of foreseeing future events by drawing lots: hence, loosely, magic.

a Knight Companion, but a preceptor of our order, first in honor as in place. Our brother, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, is well known to ourselves, and to all degrees who now hear me, as a true and zealous champion of the cross, by whose arm many deeds of valor have been wrought in the Holy Land, and the holy places purified from pollution by the blood of those infidels who defiled them. Neither have our brother's sagacity and prudence been less in repute among his brethren than his valor and discipline; in so much, that knights, both in eastern and western lands, have named De Bois-Guilbert as one who may well be put in nomination as successor to this batoon, when it shall please Heaven to release us from the toil of bearing it. If we were told that such a man, so honored, and so honorable, suddenly cast away regard for his character, his vows, his brethren, and his prospects, and finally was utterly blinded by folly, what should we say but that the noble knight was possessed by some evil demon, or influenced by some wicked spell? If we could suppose it otherwise, think not rank, valor, high repute, or any earthly consideration, should prevent us from visiting him with punishment, that the evil thing might be removed, even according to the text, *Auferte malum ex vobis.*"

He paused. A low murmur went through the assembly, which then became grave, and anxiously waited what the Grand Master was next to propose.

"Such," he said, "and so great, should indeed be the punishment of a Knight Templar who willfully offended against the rules of his order. But if, by means of charms and of spells, Satan had obtained dominion over the knight, we are then rather to lament than chastise his backsliding; and, imposing on him only such penance as may purify him, we are to turn the full edge of our indignation upon the instrument which had so well-nigh occasioned his utter falling-away. Stand forth, therefore, and bear witness, ye who have witnessed these unhappy doings, that we may judge of the sum and bearing thereof; and judge whether our justice may be satisfied with the punishment of this

infidel woman, or if we must go on, with a bleeding heart, to the further proceeding against our brother."

Several witnesses were called upon to prove the risks to which Bois-Guilbert exposed himself in endeavoring to save Rebecca from the blazing castle, and his neglect of his personal defense in attending to her safety. The men gave these details with the exaggerations common to vulgar minds which have been strongly excited by any remarkable event, and their natural disposition to the marvelous was greatly increased by the satisfaction which their evidence seemed to afford to the eminent person for whose information it had been delivered. Thus the dangers which Bois-Guilbert surmounted, in themselves sufficiently great, became portentous in their narrative. The devotion of the knight to Rebecca's defense was exaggerated beyond the bounds, not only of discretion, but even of the most frantic excess of chivalrous zeal; and his deference to what she said, even although her language was often severe and upbraiding, was painted as carried to an excess which, in a man of his haughty temper, seemed almost preternatural.

The Preceptor of Templestowe was then called on to describe the manner in which Bois-Guilbert and the Jewess arrived at the preceptory. The evidence of Malvoisin was skillfully guarded; but while he apparently studied to spare the feelings of Bois-Guilbert, he threw in from time to time such hints as seemed to infer that he labored under some temporary alienation of mind. With sighs of penitence the preceptor avowed his own contrition for having admitted Rebecca. "But my defense," he concluded, "has been made in my confession to our most reverend father the Grand Master. Joyfully will I submit to any penance he shall assign me."

"Thou hast spoken well, brother Albert," said Beaumanoir. "Thirteen paternosters are assigned by our pious founder for matins, and nine for vespers: be those services doubled by thee. Thrice a week are Templars permitted the use of flesh; but do thou keep fast for all the seven days. This do for six weeks to come, and thy penance is accomplished."

With a hypocritical look of the deepest submission, the Preceptor of Templestowe bowed to the ground before his superior, and resumed his seat.

"Were it not well, brethren," said the Grand Master, "that we examine something into the former life and conversation of this woman, specially that we may discover whether she be one likely to use magical charms and spells, since the truths which we have heard may well incline us to suppose that in this unhappy course our erring brother has been acted upon by some infernal delusion?"

Herman of Goodalricke was the fourth preceptor present· the other three were Conrade, Malvoisin, and Bois-Guilbert himself. Herman was an ancient warrior, whose face was marked with scars inflicted by the saber of the Mussulman, and had great rank and consideration among his brethren. He arose, and bowed to the Grand Master, who instantly granted him license of speech. "I would crave to know, most reverend father, of our valiant brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert, what he says to these wondrous accusations."

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert," said the Grand Master, "thou hearest the question which our brother of Goodalricke desireth thou shouldst answer. I command thee to reply to him."

Bois-Guilbert turned his head towards the Grand Master when thus addressed, and remained silent.

"He is possessed by a dumb devil," said the Grand Master. "Avoid thee, Sathanas! — Speak, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, I conjure thee, by this symbol of our holy order."

Bois-Guilbert made an effort to suppress his rising scorn and indignation, the expression of which, he was well aware, would have little availed him. "Brian de Bois-Guilbert," he answered, "replies not, most reverend father, to such wild and vague charges. If his honor be impeached, he will defend it with his body, and with that sword which has often fought for Christendom."

"We forgive thee, brother Brian," said the Grand Master; "though that thou hast boasted thy warlike achievements before

us, is a glorifying of thine own deeds, and cometh of the Enemy, who tempteth us to exalt our own worship. But thou hast our pardon, judging thou speakest less of thine own suggestion than from the impulse of him whom, by Heaven's leave, we will quell, and drive forth from our assembly." A glance of disdain flashed from the dark, fierce eyes of Bois-Guilbert, but he made no reply. —"And now," pursued the Grand Master, "since our brother of Goodalricke's question has been thus imperfectly answered, pursue we our quest, brethren, and with our patron's assistance we will search to the bottom this mystery. — Let those who have aught to witness of the life and conversation of this Jewish woman, stand forth before us." There was a bustle in the lower part of the hall; and when the Grand Master inquired the reason, it was replied there was in the crowd a bedridden man, whom the prisoner had restored to the perfect use of his limbs by a miraculous balsam.

The poor peasant, a Saxon by birth, was dragged forward to the bar, terrified at the penal consequences which he might have incurred by the guilt of having been cured of the palsy by a Jewish damsel. Perfectly cured he certainly was not, for he supported himself forward on crutches to give evidence. Most unwilling was his testimony, and given with many tears; but he admitted that two years since, when residing at York, he was suddenly afflicted with a sore disease, while laboring for Isaac the rich Jew, in his vocation of a joiner; that he had been unable to stir from his bed until the remedies applied by Rebecca's directions, and especially a warming and spicy-smelling balsam, had in some degree restored him to the use of his limbs. Moreover, he said, she had given him a pot of that precious ointment, and furnished him with a piece of money withal, to return to the house of his father, near to Templestowe. "And, may it please your gracious Reverence," said the man, "I cannot think the damsel meant harm by me, though she hath the ill hap to be a Jewess; for, even when I used her remedy, I said the *pater* and the creed, and it never operated a whit less kindly."

"Peace, slave," said the Grand Master, "and begone! It well suits brutes like thee to be tampering and trinketing with hellish cures, and to be giving your labor to the sons of mischief. I tell thee, the Fiend can impose diseases for the very purpose of removing them, in order to bring into credit some diabolical fashion of cure. Hast thou that unguent of which thou speakest?"

The peasant, fumbling in his bosom with a trembling hand, produced a small box bearing some Hebrew characters on the lid, which was, with most of the audience, a sure proof that the Devil had stood apothecary. Beaumanoir, after crossing himself, took the box into his hand, and, learned in most of the Eastern tongues, read with ease the motto on the lid: *The Lion of the Tribe of Judah hath conquered.* "Strange powers of Sathanas," said he, "which can convert Scripture into blasphemy, mingling poison with our necessary food! — Is there no leech here who can tell us the ingredients of this mystic unguent?"

Two mediciners, as they called themselves, — the one a monk, the other a barber, — appeared, and avouched they knew nothing of the materials, excepting that they savored of myrrh and camphire, which they took to be Oriental herbs. But with the true professional hatred to a successful practitioner of their art, they insinuated, that, since the medicine was beyond their own knowledge, it must necessarily have been compounded from an unlawful and magical pharmacopœia; since they themselves, though no conjurers, fully understood every branch of their art, so far as it might be exercised with the good faith of a Christian. When this medical research was ended, the Saxon peasant desired humbly to have back the medicine which he had found so salutary, but the Grand Master frowned severely at the request. "What is thy name, fellow?" said he to the cripple.

"Higg, the son of Snell," answered the peasant.

"Then Higg, son of Snell," said the Grand Master, "I tell thee it is better to be bedridden than to accept the benefit of unbelievers' medicine, that thou mayest arise and walk; better

to despoil infidels of their treasure by the strong hand than to accept of them benevolent gifts, or do them service for wages. Go thou, and do as I have said."

"Alack!" said the peasant, "an it shall not displease your Reverence, the lesson comes too late for me, for I am but a maimed man; but I will tell my two brethren, who serve the rich Rabbi Nathan Ben Samuel, that your mastership says it is more lawful to rob him than to render him faithful service."

"Out with the prating villain!" said Beaumanoir, who was not prepared to refute this practical application of his general maxim.

Higg, the son of Snell, withdrew into the crowd, but, interested in the fate of his benefactress, lingered until he should learn her doom, even at the risk of again encountering the frown of that severe judge, the terror of which withered his very heart within him.

At this period of the trial the Grand Master commanded Rebecca to unveil herself. Opening her lips for the first time, she replied patiently, but with dignity, that it was not the wont of the daughters of her people to uncover their faces when alone in an assembly of strangers. The sweet tones of her voice, and the softness of her reply, impressed on the audience a sentiment of pity and sympathy. But Beaumanoir, in whose mind the suppression of each feeling of humanity which could interfere with his imagined duty was a virtue of itself, repeated his commands that his victim should be unveiled. The guards were about to remove her veil accordingly, when she stood up before the Grand Master, and said, "Nay, for the remembrance of your mothers, for the love of your sisters, let me not be thus handled in your presence. It suits not a maiden to be unveiled by such rude grooms. I will obey you," she added with an expression of patient sorrow in her voice, which had almost melted the heart of Beaumanoir himself. "Ye are elders among your people, and at your command I will show the features of an ill-fated maiden."

She withdrew her veil, and looked on them with a countenance

in which bashfulness contended with dignity. Her exceeding beauty excited a murmur of surprise. Higg, the son of Snell, felt most deeply the effect produced by the sight of the countenance of his benefactress. "Let me go forth," he said to the warders at the door of the hall — "let me go forth! To look at her again will kill me, for I have had a share in murdering her."

"Peace, poor man!" said Rebecca, when she heard his exclamation. "Thou hast done me no harm by speaking the truth. Thou canst not aid me by thy complaints or lamentations. Peace, I pray thee! Go home and save thyself."

Higg was about to be thrust out by the compassion of the warders, who were apprehensive lest his clamorous grief should draw upon them reprehension, and upon himself punishment; but he promised to be silent, and was permitted to remain. The two men-at-arms, with whom Albert Malvoisin had not failed to communicate upon the import of their testimony, were now called forward. Though both were hardened and inflexible villains, the sight of the captive maiden, as well as her excelling beauty, at first appeared to stagger them; but an expressive glance from the Preceptor of Templestowe restored them to their dogged composure, and they delivered, with a precision which would have seemed suspicious to more impartial judges, circumstances either altogether fictitious or trivial, and natural in themselves, but rendered pregnant with suspicion by the exaggerated manner in which they were told, and the sinister commentary which the witnesses added to the facts. The circumstances of their evidence would have been, in modern days, divided into two classes. — those which were immaterial, and those which were actually and physically impossible, — but both were, in those ignorant and superstitious times, easily credited as proofs of guilt. The first class set forth that Rebecca was heard to mutter to herself in an unknown tongue; that the songs she sung by fits were of a strangely sweet sound, which made the ears of the hearer tingle and his heart throb; that she spoke at times to herself, and seemed to look upward for a reply; that her garments were of a

strange and mystic form, unlike those of women of good repute; that she had rings impressed with cabalistical devices; and that strange characters were broidered on her veil.

All these circumstances, so natural and so trivial, were gravely listened to as proofs, or at least as affording strong suspicions, that Rebecca had unlawful correspondence with mystical powers.

But there was less equivocal testimony which the credulity of the assembly, or of the greater part, greedily swallowed, however incredible. One of the soldiers had seen her work a cure upon a wounded man brought with them to the castle of Torquilstone. She did, he said, make certain signs upon the wound, and repeated certain mysterious words, which he blessed God he understood not, when the iron head of a square crossbow-bolt disengaged itself from the wound, the bleeding was stanched, the wound was closed, and the dying man was within the quarter of an hour walking upon the ramparts, and assisting the witness in managing a mangonel, or machine for hurling stones. This legend was probably founded upon the fact that Rebecca had attended on the wounded Ivanhoe when in the castle of Torquilstone. But it was the more difficult to dispute the accuracy of the witness, as, in order to produce real evidence in support of his verbal testimony, he drew from his pouch the very bolt-head which, according to his story, had been miraculously extracted from the wound; and, as the iron weighed a full ounce, it completely confirmed the tale, however miraculous.

His comrade had been a witness, from a neighboring battlement, of the scene betwixt Rebecca and Bois-Guilbert, when she was upon the point of precipitating herself from the top of the tower. Not to be behind his companion, this fellow stated that he had seen Rebecca perch herself upon the parapet of the turret, and there take the form of a milk-white swan, under which appearance she flitted three times round the castle of Torquilstone, then again settle on the turret, and once more assume the female form.

Less than one half of this weighty evidence would have been

sufficient to convict any old woman, poor and ugly, even though she had not been a Jewess. United with that fatal circumstance, the body of proof was too weighty for Rebecca's youth, though combined with the most exquisite beauty.

The Grand Master had collected the suffrages, and now in a solemn tone demanded of Rebecca what she had to say against the sentence of condemnation which he was about to pronounce.

"To invoke your pity," said the lovely Jewess with a voice tremulous with emotion, "would, I am aware, be as useless as I should hold it mean; to state that to relieve the sick and wounded of another religion cannot be displeasing to the acknowledged Founder of both our faiths, were also unavailing; to plead that many things which these men (whom may Heaven pardon!) have spoken against me are impossible, would avail me but little, since you believe in their possibility; and still less would it advantage me to explain that the peculiarities of my dress, language, and manners, are those of my people — I had well-nigh said of my country, but, alas! we have no country. Nor will I even vindicate myself at the expense of my oppressor, who stands there listening to the fictions and surmises which seem to convert the tyrant into the victim. God be judge between him and me! But rather would I submit to ten such deaths as your pleasure may denounce against me than listen to the suit which that man of Belial has urged upon me, friendless, defenseless, and his prisoner. But he is of your own faith, and his lightest affirmance would weigh down the most solemn protestations of the distressed Jewess. I will not, therefore, return to himself the charge brought against me; but to himself — yes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, to thyself — I appeal, whether these accusations are not false, as monstrous and calumnious as they are deadly."

There was a pause. All eyes turned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. He was silent.

"Speak," she said, "if thou art a man! If thou art a Christian, speak! I conjure thee, by the habit which thou dost wear, by the name thou dost inherit, by the knighthood thou dost vaunt,

by the honor of thy mother, by the tomb and the bones of thy father — I conjure thee to say, are these things true?"

"Answer her, brother," said the Grand Master, "if the Enemy with whom thou dost wrestle will give thee power."

In fact, Bois-Guilbert seemed agitated by contending passions, which almost convulsed his features; and it was with a constrained voice that at last he replied, looking to Rebecca, "The scroll, the scroll!"

"Ay," said Beaumanoir, "this is indeed testimony! The victim of her witcheries can only name the fatal scroll, the spell inscribed on which is doubtless the cause of his silence."

But Rebecca put another interpretation on the words extorted, as it were, from Bois-Guilbert, and, glancing her eye upon the slip of parchment which she continued to hold in her hand, she read written thereupon in the Arabian character, *Demand a champion!* The murmuring commentary which ran through the assembly at the strange reply of Bois-Guilbert gave Rebecca leisure to examine and instantly to destroy the scroll unobserved. When the whisper had ceased, the Grand Master spoke.

"Rebecca, thou canst derive no benefit from the evidence of this unhappy knight, for whom, as we well perceive, the Enemy is yet too powerful. Hast thou aught else to say?"

"There is yet one chance of life left to me," said Rebecca, "even by your own fierce laws. Life has been miserable,— miserable, at least, of late,— but I will not cast away the gift of God while he affords me the means of defending it. I deny this charge. I maintain my innocence, and I declare the falsehood of this accusation. I challenge the privilege of trial by combat, and will appear by my champion."

"And who, Rebecca," replied the Grand Master, "will lay lance in rest for a sorceress? Who will be the champion of a Jewess?"

"God will raise me up a champion," said Rebecca. "It cannot be that in merry England — the hospitable, the generous, the free, where so many are ready to peril their lives for honor

— there will not be found one to fight for justice. But it is enough that I challenge the trial by combat: there lies my gage."

She took her embroidered glove from her hand, and flung it down before the Grand Master with an air of mingled simplicity and dignity which excited universal surprise and admiration.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EVEN Lucas Beaumanoir himself was affected by the mien and appearance of Rebecca. He was not originally a cruel or even a severe man; but by nature cold, and with a high though mistaken sense of duty, his heart had been gradually hardened by the ascetic life which he pursued, the supreme power which he enjoyed, and the supposed necessity of subduing infidelity and eradicating heresy, which he conceived peculiarly incumbent on him. His features relaxed in their usual severity as he gazed upon the beautiful creature before him, alone, unfriended, and defending herself with so much spirit and courage. He crossed himself twice, as doubting whence arose the unwonted softening of a heart which on such occasions used to resemble in hardness the steel of his sword. At length he spoke.

"Damsel," he said, "if the pity I feel for thee arise from any practice thine evil arts have made on me, great is thy guilt; but I rather judge it the kinder feelings of nature, which grieves that so goodly a form should be a vessel of perdition. Repent, my daughter! Confess thy witchcrafts, turn thee from thine evil faith, embrace this holy emblem, and all shall yet be well with thee here and hereafter. In some sisterhood of the strictest order shalt thou have time for prayer and fitting penance, and that repentance not to be repented of. This do, and live. What has the law of Moses done for thee that thou shouldest die for it?"

"It was the law of my fathers," said Rebecca: "it was de-

livered in thunders and in storms upon the mountain of Sinai, in cloud and in fire. This, if ye are Christians, ye believe. It is, you say, recalled; but so my teachers have not taught me."

"Let our chaplain," said Beaumanoir, "stand forth, and tell this obstinate infidel"—

"Forgive the interruption," said Rebecca meekly. "I am a maiden unskilled to dispute for my religion; but I can die for it, if it be God's will. Let me pray your answer to my demand of a champion."

"Give me her glove," said Beaumanoir. "This is indeed," he continued, as he looked at the flimsy texture and slender fingers, "a slight and frail gage for a purpose so deadly! — Seest thou, Rebecca, as this thin and light glove of thine is to one of our heavy steel gauntlets, so is thy cause to that of the Temple, for it is our order which thou hast defied."

"Cast my innocence into the scale," answered Rebecca, "and the glove of silk shall outweigh the glove of iron."

"Then thou dost persist in thy refusal to confess thy guilt, and in that bold challenge which thou hast made?"

"I do persist, noble sir," answered Rebecca.

"So be it, then, in the name of Heaven," said the Grand Master; "and may God show the right!"

"Amen!" replied the preceptors around him, and the word was deeply echoed by the whole assembly.

"Brethren," said Beaumanoir, "you are aware that we might well have refused to this woman the benefit of the trial by combat; but, though a Jewess and an unbeliever, she is also a stranger and defenseless, and God forbid that she should ask the benefit of our mild laws, and that it should be refused to her! Moreover, we are knights and soldiers as well as men of religion; and shame it were to us, upon any pretense, to refuse proffered combat. Thus, therefore, stands the case. Rebecca, the daughter of Isaac of York, is, by many frequent and suspicious circumstances, defamed of sorcery practiced on the person of a noble knight of our holy order, and hath challenged the combat in

proof of her innocence. To whom, reverend brethren, is it your opinion that we should deliver the gage of battle, naming him, at the same time, to be our champion on the field?"

"To Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whom it chiefly concerns," said the Preceptor of Goodalricke, "and who, moreover, best knows how the truth stands in this matter."

"But if," said the Grand Master, "our brother Brian be under the influence of a charm or a spell — we speak but for the sake of precaution, for to the arm of none of our holy order would we more willingly confide this or a more weighty cause."

"Reverend father," answered the Preceptor of Goodalricke, "no spell can affect the champion who comes forward to fight for the judgment of God."

"Thou sayest right, brother," said the Grand Master. "Albert Malvoisin, give this gage of battle to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. — It is our charge to thee, brother," he continued, addressing himself to Bois-Guilbert, "that thou do thy battle manfully, nothing doubting that the good cause shall triumph. — And do thou, Rebecca, attend, that we assign thee the third day from the present to find a champion."

"That is but brief space," answered Rebecca, "for a stranger, who is also of another faith, to find one who will do battle, wagering life and honor for her cause, against a knight who is called an approved soldier."

"We may not extend it," answered the Grand Master: "the field must be foughten[1] in our own presence, and divers weighty causes call us on the fourth day from hence."

"God's will be done!" said Rebecca. "I put my trust in Him, to whom an instant is as effectual to save as a whole age."

"Thou hast spoken well, damsel," said the Grand Master; "but well know we who can array himself like an angel of light. It remains but to name a fitting place of combat, and, if it so hap, also of execution. — Where is the preceptor of this house?"

[1] Fought; old form for past participle of "fight."

Albert Malvoisin, still holding Rebecca's glove in his hand, was speaking to Bois-Guilbert very earnestly, but in a low voice.

"How!" said the Grand Master, "will he not receive the gage?"

"He will, he doth, most reverend father," said Malvoisin, slipping the glove under his own mantle. "And for the place of combat, I hold the fittest to be the lists of St. George belonging to this preceptory, and used by us for military exercise."

"It is well," said the Grand Master. — "Rebecca, in those lists shalt thou produce thy champion; and if thou failest to do so, or if thy champion shall be discomfited by the judgment of God, thou shalt then die the death of a sorceress, according to doom. — Let this our judgment be recorded, and the record read aloud, that no one may pretend ignorance."

One of the chaplains who acted as clerks to the chapter immediately engrossed the order in a huge volume, which contained the proceedings of the Templar Knights when solemnly assembled on such occasions; and when he had finished writing, the other read aloud the sentence of the Grand Master, which, when translated from the Norman-French in which it was couched, was expressed as follows:—

"Rebecca, a Jewess, daughter of Isaac of York, being attainted of sorcery practiced on a knight of the most holy Order of the Temple of Zion, doth deny the same, and saith that the testimony delivered against her this day is false, wicked, and disloyal; and that, by lawful *essoine*[1] of her body as being unable to combat in her own behalf, she doth offer, by a champion instead thereof, to avouch[2] her case, he performing his loyal *devoir*[3] in all knightly sort, with such arms as to gage of battle do fully appertain, and that at her peril and cost. And therewith she proffered her gage; and the gage having been delivered to the noble lord and knight, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, of the holy

[1] *Essoine* signifies excuse, and relates to the appellant's privilege of appearing by her champion, in excuse of her own person on account of her sex.

[2] Vindicate; prove.

[3] Service.

Order of the Temple of Zion, he was appointed to do this battle, in behalf of his order and himself, as injured and impaired by the practices of the appellant. Wherefore the most reverend father and puissant[1] lord, Lucas Marquis of Beaumanoir, did allow of the said challenge, and of the said *essoine* of the appellant's body, and assigned the third day for the said combat, the place being the inclosure called the lists of St. George, near to the Preceptory of Templestowe. And the Grand Master appoints the appellant to appear there by her champion, on pain of doom, as a person convicted of sorcery; and also the defendant so to appear, under the penalty of being held and adjudged recreant in case of default. And the noble lord and most reverend father aforesaid appointed the battle to be done in his own presence, and according to all that is commendable and profitable in such a case. And may God aid the just cause!"

"Amen!" said the Grand Master; and the word was echoed by all around. Rebecca spoke not, but she looked up to Heaven, and, folding her hands, remained for a minute without change of attitude. She then modestly reminded the Grand Master that she ought to be permitted some opportunity of free communication with her friends, for the purpose of making her condition known to them, and procuring, if possible, some champion to fight in her behalf.

"It is just and lawful," said the Grand Master: "choose what messenger thou shalt trust, and he shall have free communication with thee in thy prison chamber."

"Is there," said Rebecca, "any one here who, either for love of a good cause or for ample hire, will do the errand of a distressed being?"

All were silent; for none thought it safe, in the presence of the Grand Master, to avow any interest in the calumniated prisoner, lest he should be suspected of leaning towards Judaism. Not even the prospect of reward, far less any feelings of compassion alone, could surmount this apprehension.

[1] Powerful.

Rebecca stood for a few moments in indescribable anxiety, and then exclaimed, "Is it really thus? And in English land am I to be deprived of the poor chance of safety which remains to me, for want of an act of charity which would not be refused to the worst criminal?"

Higg, the son of Snell, at length replied, "I am but a maimed man, but that I can at all stir or move was owing to her charitable assistance. — I will do thine errand," he added, addressing Rebecca, "as well as a crippled object can; and happy were my limbs fleet enough to repair the mischief done by my tongue. Alas! when I boasted of thy charity, I little thought I was leading thee into danger."

"God," said Rebecca, "is the disposer of all. He can turn the captivity of Judah even by the weakest instrument. To execute his message, the snail is as sure a messenger as the falcon. Seek out Isaac of York, — here is that will pay for horse and man, — let him have this scroll. I know not if it be of Heaven the spirit which inspires me, but most truly do I judge that I am not to die this death, and that a champion will be raised up for me. Farewell! Life and death are in thy haste."

The peasant took the scroll, which contained only a few lines in Hebrew. Many of the crowd would have dissuaded him from touching a document so suspicious, but Higg was resolute in the service of his benefactress. She had saved his body, he said, and he was confident she did not mean to peril his soul.

"I will get me," he said, "my neighbor Buthan's good capul,[1] and I will be at York within as brief space as man and beast may."

But as it fortuned, he had no occasion to go so far; for within a quarter of a mile from the gate of the preceptory he met with two riders, whom, by their dress and their huge yellow caps, he knew to be Jews, and, on approaching more nearly, discovered that one of them was his ancient employer, Isaac of York. The other was the Rabbi Ben Samuel; and both had approached as

[1] Horse; in a more limited sense, work-horse.

near to the preceptory as they dared, on hearing that the Grand Master had summoned a chapter for the trial of a sorceress.

"Brother Ben Samuel," said Isaac, "my soul is disquieted, and I wot not why. This charge of necromancy is right often used for cloaking evil practices on our people."

"Be of good comfort, brother," said the physician. "Thou canst deal with the Nazarenes as one possessing the mammon of unrighteousness, and canst therefore purchase immunity at their hands: it rules the savage minds of those ungodly men, even as the signet of the mighty Solomon was said to command the evil genii. But what poor wretch comes hither upon his crutches, desiring, as I think, some speech of me? — Friend," continued the physician, addressing Higg, the son of Snell, "I refuse thee not the aid of mine art, but I relieve not with one asper[1] those who beg for alms upon the highway. Out upon thee! Hast thou the palsy in thy legs? Then let thy hands work for thy livelihood; for albeit thou be'st unfit for a speedy post, or for a careful shepherd, or for the warfare, or for the service of a hasty master, yet there be occupations — How now, brother?" said he, interrupting his harangue to look towards Isaac, who had but glanced at the scroll which Higg offered, when, uttering a deep groan, he fell from his mule like a dying man, and lay for a minute insensible.

The rabbi now dismounted in great alarm, and hastily applied the remedies which his art suggested for the recovery of his companion. He had even taken from his pocket a cupping apparatus, and was about to proceed to phlebotomy,[2] when the object of his anxious solicitude suddenly revived; but it was to dash his cap from his head, and to throw dust on his gray hairs. The physician was at first inclined to ascribe this sudden and violent emotion to the effects of insanity, and, adhering to his original purpose, began once again to handle his implements; but Isaac soon convinced him of his error.

[1] A Turkish coin worth about three fifths of a penny.

[2] The practice of blood-letting.

"Child of my sorrow," he said, "well shouldst thou be called Benoni instead of Rebecca![1] Why should thy death bring down my gray hairs to the grave, till, in the bitterness of my heart, I curse God and die!"

"Brother," said the rabbi in great surprise, "art thou a father in Israel, and dost thou utter words like unto these? I trust that the child of thy house yet liveth?"

"She liveth," answered Isaac; "but it is as Daniel who was called Belteshazzar,[2] even when within the den of the lions. She is captive unto those men of Belial; and they will wreak their cruelty upon her, sparing neither for her youth nor her comely favor. Oh! she was as a crown of green palms to my gray locks; and she must wither in a night like the gourd of Jonah![3] — Child of my love! Child of my old age! O Rebecca, daughter of Rachel! the darkness of the shadow of death hath encompassed thee."

"Yet read the scroll," said the rabbi. "Peradventure it may be that we may yet find out a way of deliverance."

"Do thou read, brother," answered Isaac, "for mine eyes are as a fountain of water."

The physician read, but in their native language, the following words:—

"To Isaac, the son of Adonikam, whom the Gentiles call Isaac of York, peace and the blessing of the promise be multiplied unto thee! My father, I am as one doomed to die for that which my soul knoweth not, — even for the crime of witchcraft. My father, if a strong man can be found to do battle for my cause with sword and spear, according to the custom of the Nazarenes, and that within the lists of Templestowe on the third day from this time, peradventure our fathers' God will give him strength to defend the innocent and her who hath none to help

[1] In the Hebrew *Ben Oni* means "child of my sorrow;" while *Ribkah* means "a noose," hence an enchanter, or one charmingly beautiful.

[2] At the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

[3] See Jonah iv. 5–11.

her; but if this may not be, let the virgins of our people mourn for me as for one cast off, and for the hart that is stricken by the hunter, and for the flower which is cut down by the scythe of the mower. Wherefore look now what thou doest, and whether there be any rescue. One Nazarene warrior might indeed bear arms in my behalf, even Wilfred, son of Cedric, whom the Gentiles call Ivanhoe; but he may not yet endure the weight of his armor. Nevertheless send the tidings unto him, my father, for he hath favor among the strong men of his people; and, as he was our companion in the house of bondage, he may find some one to do battle for my sake. And say unto him, even unto him, even unto Wilfred, the son of Cedric, that if Rebecca live, or if Rebecca die, she liveth or dieth wholly free of the guilt she is charged withal. And if it be the will of God that thou shalt be deprived of thy daughter, do not thou tarry, old man, in this land of bloodshed and cruelty; but betake thyself to Cordova, where thy brother liveth in safety under the shadow of the throne, even of the throne of Boabdil the Saracen; for less cruel are the cruelties of the Moors unto the race of Jacob than the cruelties of the Nazarenes of England."

Isaac listened with tolerable composure while Ben Samuel read the letter, and then again resumed the gestures and exclamations of Oriental sorrow, tearing his garments, besprinkling his head with dust, and ejaculating, "My daughter, my daughter! flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone!"

"Yet," said the rabbi, "take courage, for this grief availeth nothing. Gird up thy loins, and seek out this Wilfred, the son of Cedric. It may be he will help thee with counsel or with strength; for the youth hath favor in the eyes of Richard, called of the Nazarenes Cœur-de-Lion, and the tidings that he hath returned are constant in the land. It may be that he may obtain his letter and his signet, commanding these men of blood, who take their name from the Temple to the dishonor thereof, that they proceed not in their purposed wickedness."

"I will seek him out," said Isaac, "for he is a good youth, and

hath compassion for the exile of Jacob. But he cannot bear his armor, and what other Christian shall do battle for the oppressed of Zion?"

"Nay, but," said the rabbi, "thou speakest as one that knoweth not the Gentiles. With gold shalt thou buy their valor, even as with gold thou buyest thine own safety. Be of good courage, and do thou set forward to find out this Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I will also up and be doing, for great sin it were to leave thee in thy calamity. I will hie me to the city of York, where many warriors and strong men are assembled, and doubt not I will find among them some one who will do battle for thy daughter; for gold is their god, and for riches will they pawn their lives as well as their lands. Thou wilt fulfill, my brother, such promise as I may make unto them in thy name?"

"Assuredly, brother," said Isaac, "and Heaven be praised that raised me up a comforter in my misery! Howbeit, grant them not their full demand at once; for thou shalt find it the quality of this accursed people that they will ask pounds, and peradventure accept of ounces. Nevertheless be it as thou willest, for I am distracted in this thing; and what would my gold avail me if the child of my love should perish?"

"Farewell!" said the physician, "and may it be to thee as thy heart desireth."

They embraced accordingly, and departed on their several roads. The crippled peasant remained for some time, looking after them.

"These dog Jews!" said he: "to take no more notice of a free-guild brother[1] than if I were a bond slave or a Turk, or a Hebrew like themselves! They might have flung me a mancus[2] or two, however. I was not obliged to bring their unhallowed scrawls, and run the risk of being bewitched, as more folks than one told me. And what care I for the bit of gold that the wench gave me, if I am to come to harm from the priest next Easter at

[1] A fellow-member in good standing, of the same guild.

[2] A silver or gold coin worth from about 25 cents to $1.90.

confession, and be obliged to give him twice as much to make it up with him, and be called the Jew's flying post all my life, as it may hap, into the bargain! I think I was bewitched in earnest when I was beside the girl. But it was always so with Jew or Gentile, whosoever came near her, — none could stay when she had an errand to go, — and still, whenever I think of her, I would give shop and tools to save her life."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IT was in the twilight of the day when her trial, if it could be called such, had taken place, that a low knock was heard at the door of Rebecca's prison chamber. It disturbed not the inmate, who was then engaged in the evening prayer recommended by her religion, and which concluded with a hymn we have ventured thus to translate into English:—

When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out of the land of bondage came,
Her fathers' God before her moved,
An awful guide, in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answered keen,
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze,
Forsaken Israel wanders lone;
Our fathers would not know THY ways,
And THOU hast left them to their own.

But, present still, though now unseen;
When brightly shines their prosperous day,
Be thoughts of THEE a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.
And oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be THOU, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute our timbrel, trump, and horn.
But THOU hast said, the blood of goat,
The flesh of rams, I will not prize;
A contrite heart, an humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

When the sounds of Rebecca's devotional hymn had died away in silence, the low knock at the door was again renewed "Enter," she said, "if thou art a friend; and, if a foe, I have not the means of refusing thy entrance."

"I am," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, entering the apartment, "friend or foe, Rebecca, as the event of this interview shall make me."

Alarmed at the sight of this man, whom she considered as the root of her misfortunes, Rebecca drew backward, with a cautious and alarmed yet not a timorous demeanor, into the farthest corner of the apartment, as if determined to retreat as far as she could, but to stand her ground when retreat became no longer possible. She drew herself into an attitude, not of defiance, but of resolution, as one that would avoid provoking assault, yet was resolute to repel it, being offered, to the utmost of her power.

"You have no reason to fear me, Rebecca," said the Templar; "or, if I must so qualify my speech, you have at least *now* no reason to fear me."

"I fear you not, Sir Knight," replied Rebecca, although her

short-drawn breath seemed to belie the heroism of her accents. "My trust is strong, and I fear thee not."

"You have no cause," answered Bois-Guilbert gravely. "Within your call are guards, over whom I have no authority. They are designed to conduct you to death, Rebecca, yet would not suffer you to be insulted by any one, even by me, were my frenzy — for frenzy it is — to urge me so far. Thou art condemned to die, not a sudden and easy death, such as misery chooses and despair welcomes, but a slow, wretched, protracted course of torture, suited to what the diabolical bigotry of these men calls thy crime."

"And to whom — if such my fate — to whom do I owe this?" said Rebecca. "Surely only to him who dragged me hither, and who now, for some unknown purpose of his own, strives to exaggerate the wretched fate to which he exposed me."

"Think not," said the Templar, "that I have so exposed thee. I would have bucklered[1] thee against such danger with my own bosom, as freely as ever I exposed it to the shafts which had otherwise reached thy life."

"What is thy purpose, then, Sir Knight?" said the Jewess: "speak it briefly. If thou hast aught to do, save to witness the misery thou hast caused, let me know it; and then, if so it please you, leave me to myself. The step between time and eternity is short but terrible, and I have few moments to prepare for it."

"I perceive, Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert, "that thou dost continue to burden me with the charge of distresses which most fain would I have prevented. You impute what I could neither foresee nor prevent to my purpose or agency. Could I guess the unexpected arrival of yon dotard, whom some flashes of frantic valor, and the praises yielded by fools to the stupid self-torments of an ascetic, have raised for the present above his own merits, above common sense, above me, and above the hundreds of our order, who think and feel as men free from such silly and

[1] Shielded.

fantastic prejudices as are the grounds of his opinions and actions?"

"Yet," said Rebecca, "you sate a judgment upon me. You concurred in my condemnation, and, if I aright understood, are yourself to appear in arms to assure my punishment."

"Your words are bitter, Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert, pacing the apartment with impatience, "but I came not hither to bandy reproaches with you. Know that Bois-Guilbert yields not to created man, although circumstances may for a time induce him to alter his plan. His will is the mountain stream, which may indeed be turned for a little space aside by the rock, but fails not to find its course to the ocean. That scroll which warned thee to demand a champion — from whom couldst thou think it came, if not from Bois-Guilbert?"

"A brief respite from instant death," said Rebecca, "which will little avail me — was this all thou couldst do for one on whose head thou hast heaped sorrow, and whom thou hast brought near even to the verge of the tomb?"

"No, maiden," said Bois-Guilbert, "this was *not* all that I purposed. Had it not been for the accursed interference of yon fanatical dotard and the fool Goodalricke, who, being a Templar, affects to think and judge according to the ordinary rules of humanity, the office of the champion defender had devolved, not on a preceptor, but on a Companion of the order. Then I myself — such was my purpose — had, on the sounding of the trumpet, appeared in the lists as thy champion, disguised indeed in the fashion of a roving knight who seeks adventures to prove his shield and spear; and then, let Beaumanoir have chosen, not one, but two or three, of the brethren here assembled, I had not doubted to cast them out of the saddle with my single lance."

"This, Sir Knight," said Rebecca, "is but idle boasting, — a brag of what you would have done had you not found it convenient to do otherwise. You received my glove, and my champion (if a creature so desolate can find one) must encounter your lance

in the lists; yet you would assume the air of my friend and protector!"

"Thy friend and protector," said the Templar gravely, "I will yet be,—but mark at what risk, or rather at what certainty, of dishonor,—and then blame me not if I make my stipulations before I offer up all that I have hitherto held dear, to save the life of a Jewish maiden."

"Speak!" said Rebecca. "I understand thee not."

"Well, then," said Bois-Guilbert, "I will speak as freely as ever did doting penitent to his ghostly father, when placed in the tricky confessional. Rebecca, if I appear not in these lists, I lose fame and rank,—lose that which is the breath of my nostrils; the esteem, I mean, in which I am held by my brethren, and the hopes I have of succeeding to that mighty authority which is now wielded by the bigoted dotard Lucas de Beaumanoir, but of which I should make a far different use. Such is my certain doom except I appear in arms against thy cause. Accursed be he of Goodalricke, who baited this trap for me! and doubly accursed Albert de Malvoisin, who withheld me from the resolution I had formed of hurling back the glove at the face of the superstitious and superannuated fool, who listened to a charge so absurd, and against a creature so high in mind and so lovely in form as thou art!"

"And what now avails rant or flattery?" answered Rebecca. "Thou hast made thy choice between causing to be shed the blood of an innocent woman, or of endangering thine own earthly state and earthly hopes. What avails it to reckon together? Thy choice is made."

"No, Rebecca," said the knight in a softer tone, and drawing nearer towards her, "my choice is NOT made—nay, mark, it is thine to make the election. If I appear in the lists, I must maintain my name in arms; and if I do so, championed or unchampioned, thou diest by the stake and fagot, for there lives not the knight who hath coped with me in arms on equal issue or on terms of vantage save Richard Cœur-de-Lion and his minion of

Ivanhoe. Ivanhoe, as thou well knowest, is unable to bear his corselet, and Richard is in a foreign prison. If I appear, then thou diest, even although some hot-headed youth enter the lists in thy defense."

"And what avails repeating this so often?" said Rebecca.

"Much," replied the Templar; "for thou must learn to look at thy fate on every side."

"Well, then, turn the tapestry," said the Jewess, "and let me see the other side."

"If I appear," said Bois-Guilbert, "in the fatal lists, thou diest by a slow and cruel death; but if I appear not, then am I a degraded and dishonored knight, accused of witchcraft; and the illustrious name, which has grown yet more so under my wearing, becomes a hissing and a reproach. I lose fame, I lose honor, I lose the prospect of such greatness as scarce emperors attain to. I sacrifice mighty ambition, I destroy schemes built as high as the mountains with which heathens say their heaven was once nearly scaled. And yet, Rebecca," he added, throwing himself at her feet, "this greatness will I sacrifice, this fame will I renounce, this power will I forego, even now when it is half within my grasp, if thou wilt say, 'Bois-Guilbert, I receive thee.'"

"Think not of such foolishness, Sir Knight," answered Rebecca, "but hasten to the regent, the queen mother, and to Prince John: they cannot, in honor to the English crown, allow of the proceedings of your Grand Master. So shall you give me protection without sacrifice on your part, or the pretext of requiring any requital from me."

"No, damsel!" said the proud Templar, "if I renounce present fame and future ambition, I renounce it for thy sake, and we will escape in company. Listen to me, Rebecca," he said, again softening his tone: "England, Europe, is not the world. There are spheres in which we may act, ample enough even for my ambition. We will go to Palestine, where Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, is my friend. Rather with Saladin will we league ourselves than endure the scorn of the bigots whom we con-

temn. I will form new paths to greatness," he continued, again traversing the room with hasty strides. "Europe shall hear the loud step of him she has driven from her sons! Not the millions whom her crusaders send to slaughter can do so much to defend Palestine — not the sabers of the thousands and ten thousands of Saracens can hew their way so deep into that land for which nations are striving, as the strength and policy of me and those brethren, who, in despite of yonder old bigot, will adhere to me in good and evil. Thou shalt be a queen, Rebecca. On Mount Carmel[1] shall we pitch the throne which my valor will gain for you, and I will exchange my long-desired batoon for a scepter!"

"A dream," said Rebecca, — "an empty vision of the night, which, were it a waking reality, affects me not. Enough that the power which thou mightest acquire I will never share. Go to the throne of England: Richard will listen to my appeal from these cruel men."

"Never, Rebecca!" said the Templar fiercely. "If I renounce my order, for thee alone will I renounce it. Ambition shall remain mine if thou refuse my love: I will not be fooled on all hands. Stoop my crest to Richard? Ask a boon of that heart of pride? Never, Rebecca, will I place the Order of the Temple at his feet in my person. I may forsake the order: I never will degrade or betray it."

"Now God be gracious to me," said Rebecca, "for the succor of man is well-nigh hopeless!"

"It is indeed," said the Templar; "for, proud as thou art, thou hast in me found thy match. If I enter the lists with my spear in rest, think not any human consideration shall prevent my putting forth my strength; and think then upon thine own fate, — to die the dreadful death of the worst of criminals; to be consumed upon a blazing pile, dispersed to the elements of which our strange forms are so mystically composed. Rebecca, it is not in woman to sustain this prospect."

"Bois-Guilbert," answered the Jewess, "I tell thee, proud

[1] See Note 1, p. 54.

Templar, that not in thy fiercest battles hast thou displayed more of thy vaunted courage than has been shown by a woman when called upon to suffer by affection or duty. I am myself a woman, tenderly nurtured, naturally fearful of danger, and impatient of pain; yet when we enter those fatal lists, thou to fight and I to suffer, I feel the strong assurance within me that my courage shall mount higher than thine. Farewell! I waste no more words on thee. The time that remains on earth to the daughter of Jacob must be otherwise spent: she must seek the Comforter, who may hide his face from his people, but who ever opens his ear to the cry of those who seek him in sincerity and in truth."

"We part, then, thus?" said the Templar after a short pause. "Would to Heaven we had never met, or that thou hadst been noble in birth, and Christian in faith! Nay, by Heaven! when I think when and how we are next to meet, I could even wish myself one of thine own degraded nation; my hand conversant with ingots[1] and shekels instead of spear and shield, my head bent down before each petty noble, and my look only terrible to the shivering and bankrupt debtor. This could I wish, Rebecca, to be near to thee in life, and to escape the fearful share I must have in thy death."

"Thou hast spoken the Jew," said Rebecca, "as the persecution of such as thou art has made him. Heaven in ire has driven him from his country, but industry has opened to him the only road to power and to influence which oppression has left unbarred. Read the ancient history of the people of God, and tell me if those, by whom Jehovah wrought such marvels among the nations, were then a people of misers and usurers! And know, proud knight, we number names amongst us to which your boasted northern nobility is as the gourd compared with the cedar,[2] — names that ascend far back to those high times when the

[1] Gold or silver in bars or wedges, uncoined.

[2] That is, as something soon perishable is to something of vigorous durability.

Divine Presence shook the mercy-seat[1] between the cherubim, and which derive their splendor from no earthly prince, but from the awful Voice, which bade their fathers be nearest of the congregation to the Vision. Such were the princes of the House of Jacob."

Rebecca's color rose as she boasted the ancient glories of her race, but faded as she added with a sigh, "Such *were* the princes of Judah, now such no more! They are trampled down like the shorn grass, and mixed with the mire of the ways. Yet there are those among them who shame not such high descent, and of such shall be the daughter of Isaac the son of Adonikam! Farewell! I envy not thy blood-won honors; I envy not thy barbarous descent from northern heathens; I envy thee not thy faith, which is ever in thy mouth, but never in thy heart nor in thy practice."

"There is a spell on me, by Heaven!" said Bois-Guilbert. "I almost think yon skeleton spoke truth, and that the reluctance with which I part from thee has something in it more than is natural. Fair creature," he said, approaching near her, but with great respect, "so young, so beautiful, so fearless of death, and yet doomed to die, and with infamy and agony, who would not weep for thee! The tear, that has been a stranger to these eyelids for twenty years, moistens them as I gaze on thee. But it must be: nothing may now save thy life. Thou and I are but the blind instruments of some irresistible fatality that hurries us along, like goodly vessels driving before the storm, which are dashed against each other, and so perish. Forgive me, then, and let us part, at least, as friends part. I have assailed thy resolution in vain, and mine own is fixed as the adamantine decrees of fate."

"Thus," said Rebecca, "do men throw on fate the issue. But I do forgive thee, Bois-Guilbert, though the author of my early

[1] The cover of the Ark of the Covenant, of gold, having two cherubs, one at each end, stretching their wings towards one another, forming a kind of throne, on which God was thought to be present, hearing and answering prayer, and revealing his will.

death. There are noble things which cross over thy powerful mind; but it is the garden of the sluggard, and the weeds have rushed up, and conspired to choke the fair and wholesome blossom."

"Yes," said the Templar, "I am, Rebecca, as thou hast spoken me, untaught, untamed, and proud that, amidst a shoal of empty fools and crafty bigots, I have attained the preëminent fortitude that places me above them. I have been a child of battle from my youth upward, high in my views, steady and inflexible in pursuing them. Such must I remain, — proud, inflexible, and unchanging; and of this the world shall have proof. But thou forgivest me, Rebecca?"

"As freely as ever victim forgave her executioner."

"Farewell, then!" said the Templar, and left the apartment.

The preceptor Albert waited impatiently in an adjacent chamber the return of Bois-Guilbert.

"Thou hast tarried long," he said. "I have been as if stretched on red-hot iron with very impatience. What if the Grand Master, or his spy Conrade, had come hither? I had payed dear for my complaisance. But what ails thee, brother? Thy step totters, thy brow is as black as night. Art thou well, Bois-Guilbert?"

"Ay," answered the Templar, "as well as the wretch who is doomed to die within an hour. Nay, by the rood, not half so well, for there be those in such state who can lay down life like a cast-off garment. By Heaven! Malvoisin, yonder girl hath well-nigh unmanned me. I am half resolved to go to the Grand Master, abjure the order to his very teeth, and refuse to act the brutality which his tyranny has imposed on me."

"Thou art mad," answered Malvoisin. "Thou mayest thus indeed utterly ruin thyself, but canst not even find a chance thereby to save the life of this Jewess. Beaumanoir will name another of the order to defend his judgment in thy place, and the accused will as assuredly perish as if thou hadst taken the duty imposed on thee."

"'Tis false. I will myself take arms in her behalf," answered the Templar haughtily; "and should I do so, I think, Malvoisin, that thou knowest not one of the order who will keep his saddle before the point of my lance."

"Ay, but thou forgettest," said the wily adviser, "thou wilt have neither leisure nor opportunity to execute this mad project. Go to Lucas Beaumanoir, and say thou hast renounced thy vow of obedience, and see how long the despotic old man will leave thee in personal freedom. The words shall scarce have left thy lips, ere thou wilt either be a hundred feet under ground, in the dungeon of the preceptory, to abide trial as a recreant knight, or, if his opinion holds concerning thy possession, thou wilt be enjoying straw, darkness, and chains in some distant convent cell, stunned with exorcisms,[1] and drenched with holy water, to expel the foul fiend which hath obtained dominion over thee. Thou must to the lists, Brian, or thou art a lost and dishonored man."

"I will break forth and fly," said Bois-Guilbert — "fly to some distant land, to which folly and fanaticism have not yet found their way. No drop of the blood of this most excellent creature shall be spilled by my sanction."

"Thou canst not fly," said the preceptor: "thy ravings have excited suspicion, and thou wilt not be permitted to leave the preceptory. Go and make the essay: present thyself before the gate, and command the bridge to be lowered, and mark what answer thou shalt receive. Thou art surprised and offended; but is it not the better for thee? Wert thou to fly, what would ensue but the reversal of thy arms, the dishonor of thine ancestry, the degradation of thy rank? Think on it. Where shall thine own companions in arms hide their heads when Brian de Bois-Guilbert, the best lance of the Templars, is proclaimed recreant, amid the hisses of the assembled people? What grief will be at the court of France! With what joy will the haughty

[1] The driving-out of evil spirits from persons or places by magical or religious ceremonies.

Richard hear the news that the knight that set him hard[1] in Palestine, and well-nigh darkened[2] his renown, has lost fame and honor!"

"Malvoisin," said the knight, "I thank thee. Thou hast touched the string at which my heart most readily thrills. Come of it what may, recreant shall never be added to the name of Bois-Guilbert. Would to God, Richard, or any of his vaunting minions of England, would appear in these lists! But they will be empty: no one will risk to break a lance for the innocent, the forlorn."

"The better for thee if it prove so," said the preceptor. "If no champion appears, it is not by thy means that this unlucky damsel shall die, but by the doom of the Grand Master, with whom rests all the blame, and who will count that blame for praise and commendation."

"True," said Bois-Guilbert, "if no champion appears, I am but a part of the pageant, sitting indeed on horseback, in the lists, but having no part in what is to follow."

"None whatever," said Malvoisin; "no more than the armed image of St. George when it makes part of a procession."

"Well, I will resume my resolution," replied the haughty Templar. "She has despised me, repulsed me, reviled me, and wherefore should I offer up for her whatever of estimation I have in the opinion of others? Malvoisin, I will appear in the lists."

He left the apartment hastily as he uttered these words, and the preceptor followed, to watch and confirm him in his resolution; for in Bois-Guilbert's fame he had himself a strong interest, expecting much advantage from his being one day at the head of the order, not to mention the preferment of which Mont-Fitchet had given him hopes, on condition he would forward the condemnation of the unfortunate Rebecca. Yet although, in combating his friend's better feelings, he possessed all the advantage which a wily, composed, selfish disposition has over a man

[1] Pressed him hard. [2] Eclipsed.

agitated by strong and contending emotions, it required all Malvoisin's art to keep Bois-Guilbert steady to the purpose he had prevailed on him to adopt. He was obliged to watch him closely to prevent him resuming his purpose of flight, to intercept his communication with the Grand Master, lest he should come to an open rupture with his superior, and to renew from time to time the various arguments by which he endeavored to show, that, in appearing as champion on this occasion, Bois-Guilbert, without either accelerating or insuring the fate of Rebecca, would follow the only course by which he could save himself from degradation and disgrace.

CHAPTER XL.

WHEN the Black Knight — for it becomes necessary to resume the train of his adventures — left the trysting-tree of the generous outlaw, he held his way straight to a neighboring religious house, of small extent and revenue, called the Priory of St. Botolph, to which the wounded Ivanhoe had been removed when the castle was taken, under the guidance of the faithful Gurth and the magnanimous Wamba. It is unnecessary at present to mention what took place in the interim betwixt Wilfred and his deliverer; suffice it to say, that, after long and grave communication, messengers were dispatched by the prior in several directions, and that on the succeeding morning the Black Knight was about to set forth on his journey, accompanied by the jester Wamba, who attended as his guide.

"We will meet," he said to Ivanhoe, "at Coningsburgh, the castle of the deceased Athelstane, since there thy father Cedric holds the funeral feast for his noble relation. I would see your Saxon kindred together, Sir Wilfred, and become better acquainted with them than heretofore. Thou also wilt meet me, and it shall be my task to reconcile thee to thy father."

So saying, he took an affectionate farewell of Ivanhoe, who expressed an anxious desire to attend upon his deliverer; but the Black Knight would not listen to the proposal.

"Rest this day: thou wilt have scarce strength enough to travel on the next. I will have no guide with me but honest Wamba, who can play priest or fool as I shall be most in the humor."

"And I," said Wamba, "will attend you with all my heart. I would fain see the feasting at the funeral of Athelstane; for, if it be not full and frequent, he will rise from the dead to rebuke cook, sewer, and cupbearer; and that were a sight worth seeing. Always, Sir Knight, I will trust your valor with making my excuse to my master Cedric, in case mine own wit should fail."

"And how should my poor valor succeed, Sir Jester, when thy light wit halts? Resolve me that."

"Wit, Sir Knight," replied the Jester, "may do much. He is a quick, apprehensive knave, who sees his neighbor's blind side, and knows how to keep the lee-gage[1] when his passions are blowing high. But valor is a sturdy fellow that makes all split. He rows against both wind and tide, and makes way notwithstanding; and therefore, good Sir Knight, while I take advantage of the fair weather in our noble master's temper, I will expect you to bestir yourself when it grows rough."

"Sir Knight of the Fetterlock, since it is your pleasure so to be distinguished," said Ivanhoe, "I fear you may have chosen a talkative and troublesome fool to be your guide. But he knows every path and alley in the woods as well as e'er a hunter who frequents them; and the poor knave, as thou hast partly seen, is as faithful as steel."

"Nay," said the knight, "an he have the gift of showing my road, I shall not grumble with him that he desires to make it pleasant. Fare thee well, kind Wilfred! I charge thee not to attempt to travel till to-morrow at earliest."

[1] On the lee side, the side protected from the wind, the sheltered side: hence the safe side.

So saying, he extended his hand to Ivanhoe, who pressed it to his lips, took leave of the prior, mounted his horse, and departed, with Wamba for his companion. Ivanhoe followed them with his eyes, until they were lost in the shades of the surrounding forest, and then returned into the convent.

But shortly after matin song he requested to see the prior. The old man came in haste, and inquired anxiously after the state of his health.

"It is better," he said, "than my fondest hope could have anticipated. Either my wound has been slighter than the effusion of blood led me to suppose, or this balsam hath wrought a wonderful cure upon it. I feel already as if I could bear my corselet; and so much the better, for thoughts pass in my mind which render me unwilling to remain here longer in inactivity."

"Now the saints forbid," said the prior, "that the son of the Saxon Cedric should leave our convent ere his wounds were healed! It were shame to our profession were we to suffer it."

"Nor would I desire to leave your hospitable roof, venerable father," said Ivanhoe, "did I not feel myself able to endure the journey, and compelled to undertake it."

"And what can have urged you to so sudden a departure?" said the prior.

"Have you never, holy father," answered the knight, "felt an apprehension of approaching evil, for which you in vain attempted to assign a cause? Have you never found your mind darkened, like the sunny landscape, by the sudden cloud, which augurs a coming tempest? And thinkest thou not that such impulses are deserving of attention, as being the hints of our guardian spirits, that danger is impending?"

"I may not deny," said the prior, crossing himself, "that such things have been, and have been of Heaven; but then, such communications have had a visibly useful scope and tendency. But thou, wounded as thou art, what avails it thou shouldst follow the steps of him whom thou couldst not aid, were he to be assaulted?"

"Prior," said Ivanhoe, "thou dost mistake. I am stout enough to exchange buffets with any one who will challenge me to such a traffic. But were it otherwise, may I not aid him, were he in danger, by other means than by force of arms? It is but too well known that the Saxons love not the Norman race; and who knows what may be the issue, if he break in upon them when their hearts are irritated by the death of Athelstane, and their heads heated by the carousal in which they will indulge themselves? I hold his entrance among them at such a moment most perilous, and I am resolved to share or avert the danger; which that I may the better do, I would crave of thee the use of some palfrey whose pace may be softer than that of my *destrier*."[1]

"Surely," said the worthy churchman, "you shall have my own ambling jennet, and I would it ambled as easy for your sake as that of the abbot of St. Albans.[2] Yet this will I say for Malkin (for so I call her), that, unless you were to borrow a ride on the juggler's steed that paces a hornpipe amongst the eggs, you could not go a journey on a creature so gentle and smooth-paced. I have composed many a homily on her back, to the edification of my brethren of the convent and many poor Christian souls."

"I pray you, reverend father," said Ivanhoe, "let Malkin be got ready instantly, and bid Gurth attend me with mine arms."

"Nay, but, fair sir," said the prior, "I pray you to remember that Malkin hath as little skill in arms as her master, and that I warrant not her enduring the sight or weight of your full panoply. Oh, Malkin, I promise you, is a beast of judgment, and will contend against an undue weight. I did but borrow the *Fructus Temporum*[3] from the priest of St. Bees, and I promise you she would not stir from the gate until I had exchanged the huge volume for my little breviary."

"Trust me, holy father," said Ivanhoe, "I will not distress her

[1] War-horse.

[2] An ancient abbey in the county of Hertfordshire.

[3] "Fruit of the Times," the title of a book.

with too much weight; and, if she calls a combat with me, it is odds but she has the worst."

This reply was made while Gurth was buckling on the knight's heels a pair of large gilded spurs, capable of convincing any restive horse that his best safety lay in being conformable to the will of his rider.

The deep and sharp rowels with which Ivanhoe's heels were now armed began to make the worthy prior repent of his courtesy, and ejaculate, "Nay, but, fair sir, now I bethink me, my Malkin abideth not the spur. Better it were that you tarry for the mare of our manciple[1] down at the Grange, which may be had in little more than an hour, and cannot but be tractable, in respect that she draweth much of our winter firewood and eateth no corn."

"I thank you, reverend father, but will abide by your first offer, as I see Malkin is already led forth to the gate. Gurth shall carry mine armor; and for the rest, rely on it, that, as I will not overload Malkin's back, she shall not overcome my patience. And now, farewell!"

Ivanhoe now descended the stairs more hastily and easily than his wound promised, and threw himself upon the jennet, eager to escape the importunity of the prior, who stuck as closely to his side as his age and fatness would permit, now singing the praises of Malkin, now recommending caution to the knight in managing her.

Ivanhoe, who had other web to weave than to stand canvassing a palfrey's paces with its owner, lent but a deaf ear to the prior's grave advices and facetious jests, and having leapt on his mare, and commanded his squire (for such Gurth now called himself) to keep close by his side, he followed the track of the Black Knight into the forest, while the prior stood at the gate of the convent, looking after him, and ejaculating, "St. Mary! how prompt and fiery be these men of war! I would I had not trusted Malkin to his keeping; for, crippled as I am with the

[1] Steward.

cold rheum, I am undone if aught but good befalls her. And yet," said he, recollecting himself, "as I would not spare my own old and disabled limbs in the good cause of Old England, so Malkin must e'en run her hazard[1] on the same venture; and it may be they will think our poor house worthy of some munificent guerdon — or it may be they will send the old prior a pacing nag. And if they do none of these, as great men will forget little men's service, truly I shall hold me well repaid in having done that which is right. And it is now well-nigh the fitting time to summon the brethren to breakfast in the refectory. Ah! I doubt they obey that call more cheerily than the bells for primes and matins."

So the prior of St. Botolph's hobbled back again into the refectory, to preside over the stock-fish and ale, which was just serving out for the friars' breakfast.

In the mean time, the Black Champion and his guide were pacing at their leisure through the recesses of the forest, the good knight whiles humming to himself the lay of some enamored troubadour, sometimes encouraging by questions the prating disposition of his attendant, so that their dialogue formed a whimsical mixture of song and jest, of which we would fain give our readers some idea. You are then to imagine this knight, such as we have already described him, strong of person, tall, broad-shouldered, and large of bone, mounted on his mighty black charger, which seemed made on purpose to bear his weight, so easily he paced forward under it, having the visor of his helmet raised in order to admit freedom of breath, yet keeping the beaver, or under part, closed, so that his features could be but imperfectly distinguished. But his ruddy, embrowned cheek-bones could be plainly seen, and the large and bright blue eyes that flashed from under the dark shade of the raised visor; and the whole gesture and look of the champion expressed careless gayety and fearless confidence, — a mind which was unapt to apprehend danger, and prompt to defy it when most imminent,

[1] Take her chance.

yet with whom danger was a familiar thought, as with one whose trade was war and adventure.

The Jester wore his usual fantastic habit, but late accidents had led him to adopt a good cutting falchion instead of his wooden sword, with a targe[1] to match it; of both which weapons he had, notwithstanding his profession, shown himself a skillful master during the storming of Torquilstone. Indeed, the infirmity of Wamba's brain consisted chiefly in a kind of impatient irritability, which suffered him not long to remain quiet in any posture, or adhere to any certain train of ideas, although he was for a few minutes alert enough in performing any immediate task, or in apprehending any immediate topic. On horseback, therefore, he was perpetually swinging himself backwards and forwards, — now on the horse's ears, then anon on the very rump of the animal; now hanging both his legs on one side, and now sitting with his face to the tail, moping, mowing,[2] and making a thousand apish gestures, — until his palfrey took his freaks so much to heart as fairly to lay him at his length on the green grass, — an incident which greatly amused the knight, but compelled his companion to ride more steadily thereafter.

At the point of their journey at which we take them up, this joyous pair were engaged in singing a virelai, as it was called, in which the clown bore a mellow burden to the better-instructed knight of the fetterlock.

"A dainty song," said Wamba, when they had finished their carol, "and, I swear by my bauble,[3] a pretty moral! I used to sing it with Gurth, once my playfellow, and now, by the grace of God and his master, no less than a freeman; and we once came by the cudgel for being so entranced by the melody that we lay in bed two hours after sunrise, singing the ditty betwixt sleeping and waking. My bones ache at thinking of the tune ever since."

The Jester next struck into another carol, a sort of comic ditty,

[1] A shield; a buckler.

[2] Making mouths.

[3] Fool's stick. See Note 1, p. 199.

to which the knight, catching up the tune, replied in the like manner.

KNIGHT AND WAMBA.

There came three merry men from south, west, and north,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
To win the Widow of Wycombe forth,
And where was the widow might say them nay?

The first was a knight, and from Tynedale he came,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
And his fathers, God save us, were men of great fame,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Of his father the laird, of his uncle the squire,
He boasted in rhyme and in roundelay;
She bade him go bask by his sea-coal fire,
For she was the widow would say him nay.

WAMBA.

The next that came forth swore by blood and by nails,
Merrily sing the roundelay;
Hur's[1] a gentleman, God wot, and hur's lineage was of Wales,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Sir David ap[2] Morgan ap Griffith ap Hugh
Ap Tudor ap Rhice, quoth his roundelay;
She said that one widow for so many was too few,
And she bade the Welshman wend his way.

But then next came a yeoman, a yeoman of Kent,
Jollily singing his roundelay;
He spoke to the widow of living and rent,
And where was the widow could say him nay?

BOTH.

So the knight and the squire were both left in the mire,
There for to sing their roundelay;
For a yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent,
There never was a widow could say him nay.

[1] He is, or his. [2] The son of.

"I would, Wamba," said the knight, "that our host of the trysting-tree, or the jolly friar, his chaplain, heard this thy ditty in praise of our bluff yeoman."

"So would not I," said Wamba, "but for the horn that hangs at your baldric."

"Ay," said the knight, "this is a pledge of Locksley's good will, though I am not like to need it. Three mots on this bugle will, I am assured, bring round, at our need, a jolly band of yonder honest yeomen."

"I would say Heaven forfend," said the Jester, "were it not that that fair gift is a pledge they would let us pass peaceably."

"Why, what meanest thou?" said the knight. "Thinkest thou that but for this pledge of fellowship they would assault us?"

"Nay, for me I say nothing," said Wamba; "for green trees have ears, as well as stone walls. But canst thou construe me this, Sir Knight: when is thy wine-pitcher and thy purse better empty than full?"

"Why, never, I think," replied the knight.

"Thou never deservest to have a full one in thy hand, for so simple an answer! Thou hadst best empty thy pitcher ere thou pass it to a Saxon, and leave thy money at home ere thou walk in the greenwood."

"You hold our friends for robbers, then?" said the knight of the fetterlock.

"You hear me not say so, fair sir," said Wamba. "It may relieve a poor man's steed to take off his mail when he hath a long journey to make; and, certes, it may do good to the rider's soul to ease him of that which is the root of all evil: therefore will I give no hard names to those who do such services; only I would wish my mail at home, and my purse in my chamber, when I meet with these good fellows, because it may save them some trouble."

"*We* are bound to pray for them, my friend, notwithstanding the fair character thou dost afford them."

"Pray for them with all my heart," said Wamba, "but in the

town, not in the greenwood, like the abbot of St. Bees, whom they caused to say mass with an old hollow oak-tree for his stall."

"Say as thou list, Wamba," replied the knight, "these yeomen did thy master Cedric yeomanly service at Torquilstone."

"Ay, truly," answered Wamba; "but that was in the fashion of their trade with Heaven."

"Their trade, Wamba! How mean you by that?" replied his companion.

"Marry, thus," said the Jester: "they make up a balanced account with Heaven, as our old cellarer used to call his ciphering, as fair as Isaac the Jew keeps with his debtors, and, like him, give out a very little, and take large credit for doing so; reckoning, doubtless, on their own behalf, the sevenfold usury which the blessed text hath promised to charitable loans."

"Give me an example of your meaning, Wamba. I know nothing of ciphers or rates of usage," answered the knight.

"Why," said Wamba, "an your valor be so dull, you will please to learn that those honest fellows balance a good deed with one not quite so laudable, as a crown given to a begging friar with a hundred byzants taken from a fat abbot, or a wench kissed in the greenwood with the relief of a poor widow."

"Which of these was the good deed, which was the felony?" interrupted the knight.

"A good gibe,[1] a good gibe!" said Wamba. "Keeping witty company sharpeneth the apprehension. You said nothing so well, Sir Knight, I will be sworn, when you held vespers with the bluff hermit. But to go on. The merry men of the forest set off the building of a cottage with the burning of a castle, the thatching of a choir against the robbing of a church, the setting-free a poor prisoner against the murder of a proud sheriff, or, to come nearer to our point, the deliverance of a Saxon franklin against the burning-alive of a Norman baron. Gentle thieves they are, in short, and courteous robbers; but it is ever the luckiest to meet with them when they are at the worst."

[1] A jest.

"How so, Wamba?" said the knight.

"Why, then they have some compunction, and are for making up matters with Heaven. But when they have struck an even balance, Heaven help them with whom they next open the account! The travelers who first met them after their good service at Torquilstone would have a woeful flaying; and yet," said Wamba, coming close up to the knight's side, "there be companions who are far more dangerous for travelers to meet than yonder outlaws."

"And who may they be? for you have neither bears nor wolves, I trow," said the knight.

"Marry, sir, but we have Malvoisin's men-at-arms," said Wamba; "and let me tell you, that, in time of civil war, a half-score of these is worth a band of wolves at any time. They are now expecting their harvest, and are reënforced with the soldiers that escaped from Torquilstone; so that, should we meet with a band of them, we are like to pay for our feats of arms. Now, I pray you, Sir Knight, what would you do if we met two of them?"

"Pin the villains to the earth with my lance, Wamba, if they offered us any impediment."

"But what if there were four of them?"

"They should drink of the same cup," answered the knight.

"What if six," continued Wamba, "and we as we now are, barely two? Would you not remember Locksley's horn?"

"What! sound for aid," exclaimed the knight, "against a score of such *rascaille* as these, whom one good knight could drive before him as the wind drives the withered leaves?"

"Nay, then," said Wamba, "I will pray you for a close sight of that same horn that hath so powerful a breath."

The knight undid the clasp of the baldric, and indulged his fellow-traveler, who immediately hung the bugle round his own neck.

"Tra-lira-la!" said he, whistling the notes. "Nay, I know my gamut as well as another."

"How mean you, knave?" said the knight. "Restore me the bugle."

"Content you, Sir Knight, it is in safe keeping. When Valor and Folly travel, Folly should bear the horn, because she can blow the best."

"Nay, but, rogue," said the Black Knight, "this exceedeth thy license. Beware ye tamper not with my patience."

"Urge me not with violence, Sir Knight," said the Jester, keeping at a distance from the impatient champion, "or Folly will show a clean pair of heels, and leave Valor to find out his way through the wood as best he may."

"Nay, thou hast hit me there," said the knight; "and, sooth to say, I have little time to jangle with thee. Keep the horn an thou wilt, but let us proceed on our journey."

"You will not harm me, then?" said Wamba.

"I tell thee no, thou knave!"

"Ay, but pledge me your knightly word for it," continued Wamba, as he approached with great caution.

"My knightly word I pledge, only come on with thy foolish self."

"Nay, then, Valor and Folly are once more boon companions," said the Jester, coming up frankly to the knight's side; "but, in truth, I love not such buffets as that you bestowed on the burly friar, when his Holiness rolled on the green like a king of the ninepins. And now that Folly wears the horn, let Valor rouse himself and shake his mane; for, if I mistake not, there are company in yonder brake that are on the lookout for us."

"What makes thee judge so?" said the knight.

"Because I have twice or thrice noticed the glance of a morrion[1] from amongst the green leaves. Had they been honest men, they had kept the path; but yonder thicket is a choice chapel for the clerks of St. Nicholas."

"By my faith," said the knight, closing his visor, "I think thou be'st in the right on't."

[1] A kind of hat-shaped helmet without visor or beaver.

And in good time did he close it, for three arrows flew at the same instant from the suspected spot against his head and breast, one of which would have penetrated to the brain had it not been turned aside by the steel visor. The other two were averted by the gorget, and by the shield which hung around his neck.

"Thanks, trusty armorer," said the knight. "Wamba, let us close with them," and he rode straight to the thicket. He was met by six or seven men-at-arms, who ran against him with their lances at full career.[1] Three of the weapons struck against him and splintered with as little effect as if they had been driven against a tower of steel. The Black Knight's eyes seemed to flash fire even through the aperture of his visor. He raised himself in his stirrups with an air of inexpressible dignity, and exclaimed, "What means this, my masters?" The men made no other reply than by drawing their swords and attacking him on every side, crying, "Die, tyrant!"

"Ha, St. Edward! Ha, St. George!" said the Black Knight, striking down a man at every invocation. "Have we traitors here?"

His opponents, desperate as they were, bore back from an arm which carried death in every blow; and it seemed as if the terror of his single strength was about to gain the battle against such odds, when a knight in blue armor, who had hitherto kept himself behind the other assailants, spurred forward with his lance, and taking aim, not at the rider, but at the steed, wounded the noble animal mortally.

"That was a felon[2] stroke!" exclaimed the Black Knight, as the steed fell to the earth, bearing his rider along with him.

And at this moment Wamba winded the bugle, for the whole had passed so speedily that he had not time to do so sooner. The sudden sound made the murderers bear back once more; and Wamba, though so imperfectly weaponed, did not hesitate to rush in and assist the Black Knight to rise.

"Shame on ye, false cowards!" exclaimed he in the blue har-

[1] Speed. [2] Malicious; foul.

ness, who seemed to lead the assailants. "Do ye fly from the empty blast of a horn blown by a jester?"

Animated by his words, they attacked the Black Knight anew, whose best refuge was now to place his back against an oak, and defend himself with his sword. The felon knight, who had taken another spear, watching the moment when his formidable antagonist was most closely pressed, galloped against him in hopes to nail him with his lance against the tree, when his purpose was again intercepted by Wamba. The Jester, making up by agility the want of strength, and little noticed by the men-at-arms, who were busied in their more important object, hovered on the skirts of the fight, and effectually checked the fatal career of the blue knight by hamstringing[1] his horse with a stroke of his sword. Horse and man went to the ground; yet the situation of the knight of the fetterlock continued very precarious, as he was pressed close by several men completely armed, and began to be fatigued by the violent exertions necessary to defend himself on so many points at nearly the same moment, when a gray-goose shaft suddenly stretched on the earth one of the most formidable of his assailants, and a band of yeomen broke forth from the glade, headed by Locksley and the jovial friar, who, taking ready and effectual part in the fray, soon disposed of the ruffians, all of whom lay on the spot dead or mortally wounded. The Black Knight thanked his deliverers with a dignity they had not observed in his former bearing, which hitherto had seemed rather that of a blunt, bold soldier than of a person of exalted rank.

"It concerns me much," he said, "even before I express my full gratitude to my ready friends, to discover, if I may, who have been my unprovoked enemies. — Open the visor of that blue knight, Wamba, who seems the chief of these villains."

The Jester instantly made up to the leader of the assassins, who, bruised by his fall, and entangled under the wounded steed, lay incapable either of flight or resistance.

"Come, valiant sir," said Wamba, "I must be your armorer

[1] Cutting the tendons of the legs; disabling.

as well as your equerry. I have dismounted you, and now I will unhelm you."

So saying, with no very gentle hand he undid the helmet of the blue knight, which, rolling to a distance on the grass, displayed to the knight of the fetterlock grizzled locks, and a countenance he did not expect to have seen under such circumstances.

"Waldemar Fitzurse!" he said in astonishment, "what could urge one of thy rank and seeming worth to so foul an undertaking?"

"Richard," said the captive knight, looking up to him, "thou knowest little of mankind if thou knowest not to what ambition and revenge can lead every child of Adam."

"Revenge?" answered the Black Knight. "I never wronged thee. On me thou hast naught to revenge."

"My daughter, Richard, whose alliance thou didst scorn — was that no injury to a Norman, whose blood is noble as thine own?"

"Thy daughter?" replied the Black Knight, "a proper cause of enmity, and followed up to a bloody issue! — Stand back, my masters, I would speak to him alone. — And now, Waldemar Fitzurse, say me the truth. Confess who set thee on this traitorous deed."

"Thy father's son," answered Waldemar, "who, in so doing, did but avenge on thee thy disobedience to thy father."

Richard's eyes sparkled with indignation, but his better nature overcame it. He pressed his hand against his brow, and remained an instant gazing on the face of the humbled baron, in whose features pride was contending with shame.

"Thou dost not ask thy life, Waldemar," said the King.

"He that is in the lion's clutch," answered Fitzurse, "knows it were needless."

"Take it, then, unasked," said Richard: "the lion preys not on prostrate carcasses. Take thy life, but with this condition, — that in three days thou shalt leave England, and go to hide thine infamy in thy Norman castle, and that thou wilt never mention the name of John of Anjou as connected with thy felony. If

thou art found on English ground after the space I have allotted thee, thou diest; or if thou breathest aught that can attaint the honor of my house, by St. George! not the altar itself shall be a sanctuary. I will hang thee out to feed the ravens, from the very pinnacle of thine own castle. — Let this knight have a steed, Locksley, for I see your yeomen have caught those which were running loose, and let him depart unharmed."

"But that I judge I listen to a voice whose behests must not be disputed," answered the yeoman, "I would send a shaft after the skulking villain that should spare him the labor of a long journey."

"Thou bearest an English heart, Locksley," said the Black Knight, "and well dost judge thou art the more bound to obey my behest. I am Richard of England!"

At these words, pronounced in a tone of majesty suited to the high rank and no less distinguished character of Cœur-de-Lion, the yeomen at once kneeled down before him, and at the same time tendered their allegiance, and implored pardon for their offenses.

"Rise, my friends," said Richard in a gracious tone, looking on them with a countenance in which his habitual good humor had already conquered the blaze of hasty resentment, and whose features retained no mark of the late desperate conflict, excepting the flush arising from exertion. "Arise," he said, "my friends! Your misdemeanors, whether in forest or field, have been atoned by the loyal services you rendered my distressed subjects before the walls of Torquilstone, and the rescue you have this day afforded to your sovereign. Arise, my liegemen, and be good subjects in future. — And thou, brave Locksley" —

"Call me no longer Locksley, my liege, but know me under the name which, I fear, fame hath blown too widely not to have reached even your royal ears. I am Robin Hood[1] of Sherwood Forest."

[1] From the ballads of Robin Hood, we learn that this celebrated outlaw, when in disguise, sometimes assumed the name of Locksley, from a village where he was born, but where situated we are not distinctly told.

"King of outlaws, and prince of good fellows!" said the King. "Who hath not heard a name that has been borne as far as Palestine? But be assured, brave outlaw, that no deed done in our absence, and in the turbulent times to which it hath given rise, shall be remembered to thy disadvantage."

"True says the proverb," said Wamba, interposing his word, but with some abatement of his usual petulance,—

"'When the cat is away,
The mice will play.'"

"What, Wamba, art thou there?" said Richard. "I have been so long of hearing thy voice, I thought thou hadst taken flight."

"I take flight!" said Wamba. "When do you ever find Folly separated from Valor? There lies the trophy of my sword, that good gray gelding, whom I heartily wish upon his legs again, conditioning[1] his master lay there houghed[2] in his place. It is true, I gave a little ground at first, for a motley jacket does not brook lance-heads as a steel doublet will. But, if I fought not at sword's point, you will grant me that I sounded the onset."

"And to good purpose, honest Wamba," replied the King. "Thy good service shall not be forgotten."

"*Confiteor*,[3] *confiteor!*" exclaimed, in a submissive tone, a voice near the King's side — "my Latin will carry me no further — but I confess my deadly treason, and pray leave to have absolution before I am led to execution!"

Richard looked around, and beheld the jovial friar on his knees, telling his rosary, while his quarter-staff, which had not been idle during the skirmish, lay on the grass beside him. His countenance was gathered so as he thought might best express the most profound contrition, his eyes being turned up, and the corners of his mouth drawn down, as Wamba expressed it, like the tassels at the mouth of a purse. Yet this demure affectation

[1] Stipulating; on the condition that. [2] Hamstrung. [3] "I confess."

of extreme penitence was whimsically belied by a ludicrous meaning which lurked in his huge features, and seemed to pronounce his fear and repentance alike hypocritical.

"For what art thou cast down, mad priest?" said Richard. "Art thou afraid thy diocesan[1] should learn how truly thou dost serve Our Lady and St. Dunstan? Tush, man! fear it not. Richard of England betrays no secrets that pass over the flagon."

"Nay, most gracious sovereign," answered the hermit (well known to the curious in penny histories of Robin Hood by the name of Friar Tuck), "it is not the crosier[2] I fear, but the scepter.[3] Alas! that my sacrilegious fist should ever have been applied to the ear of the Lord's anointed!"

"Ha, ha!" said Richard, "sits the wind there? In truth, I had forgotten the buffet, though mine ear sung after it for a whole day; but, if the cuff was fairly given, I will be judged by the good men around if it was not as well repaid; or, if thou thinkest I still owe thee aught, and will stand forth for another counter-buff"—

"By no means," replied Friar Tuck. "I had mine own returned, and with usury. May your Majesty ever pay your debts as fully!"

"If I could do so with cuffs," said the King, "my creditors should have little reason to complain of an empty exchequer."

"And yet," said the friar, resuming his demure, hypocritical countenance, "I know not what penance I ought to perform for that most sacrilegious blow."

"Speak no more of it, brother," said the King. "After having stood so many cuffs from Paynims and misbelievers, I were void of reason to quarrel with the buffet of a clerk so holy as he of Copmanhurst. Yet, mine honest friar, I think it would be best, both for the Church and thyself, that I should procure a li-

[1] Bishop. [2] The staff of office of a bishop.

[3] The emblem of sovereignty. The meaning is, of course, that he fears not the bishop, but the King.

cense to unfrock thee, and retain thee as a yeoman of our guard, serving in care of our person as formerly in attendance upon the altar of St. Dunstan."

"My liege," said the friar, "I humbly crave your pardon; and you would readily grant my excuse did you but know how the sin of laziness has beset me. St. Dunstan — may he be gracious to us! — stands quiet in his niche, though I should forget my orisons in killing a fat buck. I stay out of my cell sometimes a night, doing I wot not what. St. Dunstan never complains. A quiet master he is, and a peaceful, as ever was made of wood. But to be a yeoman in attendance on my sovereign the King — the honor is great, doubtless; yet, if I were but to step aside to kill a deer, it would be, 'Who has seen Tuck? The unfrocked villain destroys more venison than half the country besides.' In fine, good my liege, I pray you to leave me as you found me; or, if in aught you desire to extend your benevolence to me, that I may be considered as the poor clerk of St. Dunstan's cell in Copmanhurst, to whom any small donation will be most thankfully acceptable."

"I understand thee," said the King, "and the Holy Clerk shall have a grant of vert[1] and venison in my woods of Warncliffe. Mark, however, I will but assign thee three bucks every season; but, if that do not prove an apology for thy slaying thirty, I am no Christian knight nor true king."

"Your Grace may be well assured," said the friar, "that, with the grace of St. Dunstan, I shall find the way of multiplying your most bounteous gift."

"I nothing doubt it, good brother," said the King; "and, as venison is but dry food, our cellarer shall have orders to deliver to thee a butt of sack, a runlet of Malvoisie, and three hogsheads of ale of the first strike,[2] yearly. If that will not quench thy

[1] Forest liberty. In English forest law, the term "vert" refers to everything that grows and bears a green leaf in a forest; and the duty of the verderer, or King's forest-keeper, was to preserve vert and venison.

[2] Quality.

thirst, thou must come to court, and become acquainted with my butler."

"But for St. Dunstan?" said the friar.

"A cope, a stole,[1] and an altar-cloth shalt thou also have," continued the King, crossing himself; "but we may not turn our game into earnest, lest God punish us for thinking more on our follies than on his honor and worship."

"I will answer for my patron," said the priest joyously.

"Answer for thyself, friar," said King Richard something sternly; but immediately stretching out his hand to the hermit, the latter, somewhat abashed, bent his knee and saluted it. "Thou dost less honor to my extended palm than to my clinched fist," said the monarch: "thou didst only kneel to the one, and to the other didst prostrate thyself."

But the friar, afraid perhaps of again giving offense by continuing the conversation in too jocose a style, — a false step to be particularly guarded against by those who converse with monarchs, — bowed profoundly, and fell into the rear.

At the same time two additional personages appeared on the scene.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE new-comers were Wilfred of Ivanhoe, on the Prior of Botolph's palfrey, and Gurth, who attended him, on the knight's own war-horse. The astonishment of Ivanhoe was beyond bounds when he saw his master besprinkled with blood, and six or seven dead bodies lying around in the little glade in which the battle had taken place. Nor was he less surprised to see Richard surrounded by so many silvan attendants, — the outlaws, as they seemed to be, of the forest, and a perilous retinue, therefore, for a prince. He hesitated whether to address the King as the Black Knight-errant, or in what other manner to demean himself towards him. Richard saw his embarrassment.

[1] A narrow band of silk or other material, worn by priests.

"Fear not, Wilfred," he said, "to address Richard Plantagenet as himself, since thou seest him in the company of true English hearts, although it may be they have been urged a few steps aside by warm English blood."

"Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe," said the gallant outlaw, stepping forward, "my assurances can add nothing to those of our sovereign; yet let me say somewhat proudly, that, of men who have suffered much, he hath not truer subjects than those who now stand around him."

"I cannot doubt it, brave man," said Wilfred, "since thou art of the number; but what mean these marks of death and danger, — these slain men, and the bloody armor of my prince?"

"Treason hath been with us, Ivanhoe," said the King; "but, thanks to these brave men, treason hath met its meed. But, now I bethink me, thou too art a traitor," said Richard, smiling, — "a most disobedient traitor; for were not our orders positive that thou shouldst repose thyself at St. Botolph's until thy wound was healed?"

"It is healed," said Ivanhoe: "it is not of more consequence than the scratch of a bodkin. But why, oh why, noble prince, will you thus vex the hearts of your faithful servants, and expose your life by lonely journeys and rash adventures, as if it were of no more value than that of a mere knight-errant, who has no interest on earth but what lance and sword may procure him?"

"And Richard Plantagenet,"[1] said the King, "desires no more fame than his good lance and sword may acquire him; and Richard Plantagenet is prouder of achieving an adventure, with only his good sword, and his good arm to speed, than if he led to battle a host of a hundred thousand armed men."

"But your kingdom, my liege," said Ivanhoe — "your kingdom is threatened with dissolution and civil war; your subjects menaced with every species of evil, if deprived of their sovereign

[1] The name by which the House of Anjou is generally known in English history; derived from the words *planta genesta*, the broom plant, a sprig of which was worn upon his cap by Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry II.'s father.

in some of those dangers which it is your daily pleasure to incur, and from which you have but this moment narrowly escaped."

"Ho, ho! my kingdom and my subjects?" answered Richard impatiently. "I tell thee, Sir Wilfred, the best of them are most willing to repay my follies in kind. For example: my very faithful servant Wilfred of Ivanhoe will not obey my positive commands, and yet reads his King a homily because he does not walk exactly by his advice. Which of us has most reason to upbraid the other? Yet forgive me, my faithful Wilfred. The time I have spent, and am yet to spend, in concealment, is, as I explained to thee at St. Botolph's, necessary to give my friends and faithful nobles time to assemble their forces, that, when Richard's return is announced, he should be at the head of such a force as enemies shall tremble to face, and thus subdue the meditated treason without even unsheathing a sword. Estoteville and Bohun will not be strong enough to move forward to York for twenty-four hours. I must have news of Salisbury from the south, and of Beauchamp in Warwickshire, and of Multon and Percy in the north. The chancellor must make sure of London. Too sudden an appearance would subject me to dangers other than my lance and sword, though backed by the bow of bold Robin, or the quarter-staff of Friar Tuck, and the horn of the sage Wamba, may be able to rescue me from."

Wilfred bowed in submission, well knowing how vain it was to contend with the wild spirit of chivalry which so often impelled his master upon dangers which he might easily have avoided, or, rather, which it was unpardonable in him to have sought out. The young knight sighed, therefore, and held his peace; while Richard, rejoiced at having silenced his counselor, though his heart acknowledged the justice of the charge he had brought against him, went on in conversation with Robin Hood. "King of outlaws," he said, "have you no refreshment to offer to your brother sovereign? for these dead knaves have found me both in exercise and appetite."

"In troth," replied the outlaw, "for I scorn to lie to your

Grace, our larder is chiefly supplied with"— He stopped, and was somewhat embarrassed.

"With venison, I suppose?" said Richard gayly. "Better food at need there can be none; and truly, if a king will not remain at home and slay his own game, methinks he should not brawl too loud if he finds it killed to his hand."

"If your Grace, then," said Robin, "will again honor with your presence one of Robin Hood's places of rendezvous, the venison shall not be lacking, and a stoup of ale, and it may be a cup of reasonably good wine, to relish it withal."

The outlaw accordingly led the way, followed by the buxom monarch, more happy, probably, in this chance meeting with Robin Hood and his foresters, than he would have been in again assuming his royal state and presiding over a splendid circle of peers and nobles. Novelty in society and adventure were the zest of life to Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and it had its highest relish when enhanced by dangers encountered and surmounted. In the lion-hearted King, the brilliant but useless character of a knight of romance was in a great measure realized and revived; and the personal glory which he acquired by his own deeds of arms was far more dear to his excited imagination than that which a course of policy and wisdom would have spread around his government. Accordingly his reign was like the course of a brilliant and rapid meteor, which shoots along the face of heaven, shedding around an unnecessary and portentous light, which is instantly swallowed up by universal darkness; his feats of chivalry furnishing themes for bards and minstrels, but affording none of those solid benefits to his country on which history loves to pause, and hold up as an example to posterity. But in his present company Richard showed to the greatest imaginable advantage. He was gay, good-humored, and fond of manhood in every rank of life.

Beneath a huge oak-tree the silvan repast was hastily prepared for the King of England, surrounded by men, outlaws to his government, but who now formed his court and his guard. As the

flagon went round, the rough foresters soon lost their awe for the presence of majesty. The song and the jest were exchanged; the stories of former deeds were told with advantage; and at length, and while boasting of their successful infraction of the laws, no one recollected they were speaking in presence of their natural guardian. The merry King, nothing heeding his dignity any more than his company, laughed, quaffed, and jested among the jolly band. The natural and rough sense of Robin Hood led him to be desirous that the scene should be closed ere anything should occur to disturb its harmony, the more especially that he observed Ivanhoe's brow clouded with anxiety. "We are honored," he said to Ivanhoe apart, "by the presence of our gallant sovereign; yet I would not that he dallied with time, which the circumstances of his kingdom may render precious."

"It is well and wisely spoken, brave Robin Hood," said Wilfred apart; "and know, moreover, that they who jest with majesty, even in its gayest mood, are but toying with the lion's whelp, which, on slight provocation, uses both fangs and claws."

"You have touched the very cause of my fear," said the outlaw. "My men are rough by practice and nature; the King is hasty as well as good-humored; nor know I how soon cause of offense may arise, or how warmly it may be received. It is time this revel were broken off."

"It must be by your management, then, gallant yeoman," said Ivanhoe; "for each hint I have essayed to give him serves only to induce him to prolong it."

"Must I so soon risk the pardon and favor of my sovereign?" said Robin Hood, pausing for an instant; "but by St. Christopher, it shall be so! I were undeserving his grace did I not peril it for his good. — Here, Scathlock, get thee behind yonder thicket, and wind me a Norman blast on thy bugle, and without an instant's delay, on peril of your life."

Scathlock obeyed his captain, and in less than five minutes the revelers were startled by the sound of his horn.

"It is the bugle of Malvoisin," said the miller, starting to his

feet, and seizing his bow. The friar dropped the flagon, and grasped his quarter-staff. Wamba stopped short in the midst of a jest, and betook himself to sword and target. All the others stood to their weapons.

Men of their precarious course of life change readily from the banquet to the battle, and to Richard the exchange seemed but a succession of pleasure. He called for his helmet and the most cumbrous parts of his armor, which he had laid aside; and, while Gurth was putting them on, he laid his strict injunctions on Wilfred, under pain of his highest displeasure, not to engage in the skirmish which he supposed was approaching.

"Thou hast fought for me an hundred times, Wilfred, and I have seen it. Thou shalt this day look on, and see how Richard will fight for his friend and liegeman."

In the mean time, Robin Hood had sent off several of his followers in different directions, as if to reconnoiter the enemy; and, when he saw the company effectually broken up, he approached Richard, who was now completely armed, and, kneeling down on one knee, craved pardon of his sovereign.

"For what, good yeoman?" said Richard somewhat impatiently. "Have we not already granted thee a full pardon for all transgressions? Thinkest thou our word is a feather, to be blown backward and forward between us? Thou canst not have had time to commit any new offense since that time?"

"Ay, but I have, though," answered the yeoman, "if it be an offense to deceive my prince for his own advantage. The bugle you have heard was none of Malvoisin's, but blown by my direction, to break off the banquet, lest it trenched upon hours of dearer import than to be thus dallied with."

He then rose from his knee, folded his arms on his bosom, and, in a manner rather respectful than submissive, awaited the answer of the King,—like one who is conscious he may have given offense, yet is confident in the rectitude of his motive. The blood rushed in anger to the countenance of Richard; but it was the first transient emotion, and his sense of justice instantly subdued it.

"The King of Sherwood," he said, "grudges his venison and his wine-flask to the King of England? It is well, bold Robin; but when you come to see me in merry London, I trust to be a less niggard host. Thou art right, however, good fellow. Let us therefore to horse and away! Wilfred has been impatient this hour. Tell me, bold Robin, hast thou never a friend in thy band, who, not content with advising, will needs direct thy motions, and look miserable when thou dost presume to act for thyself?"

"Such a one," said Robin, "is my lieutenant, Little John, who is even now absent on an expedition as far as the borders of Scotland; and I will own to your Majesty that I am sometimes displeased by the freedom of his counsels, but, when I think twice, I cannot be long angry with one who can have no motive for his anxiety save zeal for his master's service."

"Thou art right, good yeoman," answered Richard; "and if I had Ivanhoe on the one hand to give grave advice, and recommend it by the sad gravity of his brow, and thee on the other to trick me into what thou thinkest my own good, I should have as little the freedom of mine own will as any king in Christendom or Heathenesse. — But come, sirs, let us merrily on to Coningsburgh, and think no more on't."

Robin Hood assured them that he had detached a party in the direction of the road they were to pass, who would not fail to discover and apprise them of any secret ambuscade; and that he had little doubt they would find the ways secure, or, if otherwise, would receive such timely notice of the danger as would enable them to fall back on a strong troop of archers with which he himself proposed to follow on the same route.

The wise and attentive precautions adopted for his safety touched Richard's feelings, and removed any slight grudge which he might retain on account of the deception the outlaw captain had practiced upon him. He once more extended his hand to Robin Hood, assured him of his full pardon and future favor, as well as his firm resolution to restrain the tyrannical exercise of

the forest rights and other oppressive laws by which so many English yeomen were driven into a state of rebellion. But Richard's good intentions towards the bold outlaw were frustrated by the King's untimely death; and the Charter of the Forest was extorted from the unwilling hands of King John when he succeeded to his heroic brother. As for the rest of Robin Hood's career, as well as the tale of his treacherous death, they are to be found in those black-letter[1] garlands, once sold at the low and easy rate of one halfpenny,

"Now cheaply purchased at their weight in gold."

The outlaw's opinion proved true; and the King, attended by Ivanhoe, Gurth, and Wamba, arrived, without any interruption, within view of the castle of Coningsburgh, while the sun was yet in the horizon.

There are few more beautiful or striking scenes in England than are presented by the vicinity of this ancient Saxon fortress. The soft and gentle river Don sweeps through an amphitheater in which cultivation is richly blended with woodland; and on a mount ascending from the river, well defended by walls and ditches, rises this ancient edifice, which, as its Saxon name implies, was, previous to the Conquest, a royal residence of the kings of England. The outer walls have probably been added by the Normans, but the inner keep bears token of very great antiquity. It is situated on a mount at one angle of the inner court, and forms a complete circle of perhaps twenty-five feet in diameter. The wall is of immense thickness, and is propped or defended by six huge external buttresses which project from the circle, and rise up against the sides of the tower as if to strengthen or to support it. These massive buttresses are solid when they arise from the foundation, and a good way higher up, but are hollowed out towards the top, and terminate in a sort of turrets communicating with the interior of the keep itself. The distant appearance of this huge building, with these singular accompani-

[1] Old English print ballads.

ments, is as interesting to the lovers of the picturesque as the interior of the castle is to the eager antiquary, whose imagination it carries back to the days of the Heptarchy. A barrow in the vicinity of the castle is pointed out as the tomb of the memorable Hengist, and various monuments, of great antiquity and curiosity, are shown in the neighboring churchyard.

When Cœur-de-Lion and his retinue approached this rude yet stately building, it was not, as at present, surrounded by external fortifications. The Saxon architect had exhausted his art in rendering the main keep defensible, and there was no other circumvallation than a rude barrier of palisades.

A huge black banner, which floated from the top of the tower, announced that the obsequies of the late owner were still in the act of being solemnized. It bore no emblem of the deceased's birth or quality; for armorial bearings were then a novelty among the Norman chivalry themselves, and were totally unknown to the Saxons. But above the gate was another banner, on which the figure of a white horse, rudely painted, indicated the nation and rank of the deceased, by the well-known symbol of Hengist and his Saxon warriors.

All around the castle was a scene of busy commotion; for such funeral banquets were times of general and profuse hospitality, which not only every one who could claim the most distant connection with the deceased, but all passengers whatsoever, were invited to partake. The wealth and consequence of the deceased Athelstane occasioned this custom to be observed in the fullest extent.

Numerous parties, therefore, were seen ascending and descending the hill on which the castle was situated; and when the King and his attendants entered the open and unguarded gates of the external barrier, the space within presented a scene not easily reconciled with the cause of the assemblage. In one place cooks were toiling to roast huge oxen and fat sheep; in another, hogsheads of ale were set abroach,[1] to be drained at the freedom of

[1] Tapped.

all comers. Groups of every description were to be seen devouring the food and swallowing the liquor thus abandoned to their discretion. The naked Saxon serf was drowning the sense of his half-year's hunger and thirst in one day of gluttony. The more pampered burgess and guild-brother was eating his morsel with gust,[1] or curiously criticising the quantity of the malt and the skill of the brewer. Some few of the poorer Norman gentry might also be seen, distinguished by their shaven chins and short cloaks, and not less so by their keeping together, and looking with great scorn on the whole solemnity even while condescending to avail themselves of the good cheer which was so liberally supplied.

Mendicants were of course assembled by the score, together with strolling soldiers returned from Palestine (according to their own account, at least); peddlers were displaying their wares; traveling mechanics were inquiring after employment; and wandering palmers, hedge-priests,[2] Saxon minstrels, and Welsh bards were muttering prayers, and extracting mistuned dirges from their harps, crowds, and rotes.[3] One sent forth the praises of Athelstane in a doleful panegyric; another, in a Saxon genealogical poem, rehearsed the uncouth and harsh names of his noble ancestry. Jesters and jugglers were not awanting, nor was the occasion of the assembly supposed to render the exercise of their profession indecorous or improper. Indeed, the ideas of the Saxons on these occasions were as natural as they were rude. If sorrow was thirsty, there was drink; if hungry, there was food; if it sunk down upon and saddened the heart, here were the means supplied of mirth, or at least of amusement. Nor did the assistants scorn to avail themselves of those means of consolation, although every now and then, as if suddenly recollecting the cause which had brought them together, the men groaned in

[1] Relish. [2] Poor, mean priests.

[3] The crowth, or crowd, was a species of violin; the rote, a sort of guitar, or rather hurdy-gurdy, the strings of which were managed by a wheel, from which the instrument took its name.

unison, while the females, of whom many were present, raised up their voices and shrieked for very woe.

Such was the scene in the castle-yard at Coningsburgh when it was entered by Richard and his followers. The seneschal or steward deigned not to take notice of the groups of inferior guests who were perpetually entering and withdrawing, unless so far as was necessary to preserve order; nevertheless he was struck by the good mien of the monarch and Ivanhoe, more especially as he imagined the features of the latter were familiar to him. Besides, the approach of two knights, for such their dress bespoke them, was a rare event at a Saxon solemnity, and could not but be regarded as a sort of honor to the deceased and his family. And in his sable dress, and holding in his hand his white wand of office, this important personage made way through the miscellaneous assemblage of guests, thus conducting Richard and Ivanhoe to the entrance of the tower. Gurth and Wamba speedily found acquaintances in the courtyard, nor presumed to intrude themselves any farther until their presence should be required.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE mode of entering the great tower of Coningsburgh Castle is very peculiar, and partakes of the rude simplicity of the early times in which it was erected. A flight of steps, so deep and narrow as to be almost precipitous, leads up to a low portal in the south side of the tower, by which the adventurous antiquary may still, or at least could a few years since, gain access to a small stair within the thickness of the main wall of the tower, which leads up to the third story of the building; the two lower being dungeons or vaults, which neither receive air nor light, save by a square hole in the third story, with which they seem to have communicated by a ladder. The access to the upper apartments in the tower, which consist, in all, of four stories, is given by stairs which are carried up through the external buttresses.

By this difficult and complicated entrance the good King Richard, followed by his faithful Ivanhoe, was ushered into the round apartment which occupies the whole of the third story from the ground. Wilfred, by the difficulties of the ascent, gained time to muffle his face in his mantle, as it had been held expedient that he should not present himself to his father until the King should give him the signal.

There were assembled in this apartment, around a large oaken table, about a dozen of the most distinguished representatives of the Saxon families in the adjacent counties. These were all old, or at least elderly men; for the younger race, to the great displeasure of the seniors, had, like Ivanhoe, broken down many of the barriers which separated for half a century the Norman victors from the vanquished Saxons. The downcast and sorrowful looks of these venerable men, their silence and their mournful posture, formed a strong contrast to the levity of the revelers on the outside of the castle. Their gray locks and long, full beards, together with their antique tunics and loose black mantles, suited well with the singular and rude apartment in which they were seated, and gave the appearance of a band of ancient worshipers of Woden,[1] recalled to life to mourn over the decay of their national glory.

Cedric, seated in equal rank among his countrymen, seemed yet, by common consent, to act as chief of the assembly. Upon the entrance of Richard (only known to him as the valorous knight of the fetterlock) he arose gravely, and gave him welcome by the ordinary salutation, *Waes hael*, raising at the same time a goblet to his head. The King, no stranger to the customs of his English subjects, returned the greeting with the appropriate words, *Drink hael*, and partook of a cup which was handed to him by the sewer. The same courtesy was offered to Ivanhoe, who pledged his father in silence, supplying the usual speech by an inclination of his head, lest his voice should have been recognized.

[1] Odin (see Note 3, p. 23).

When this introductory ceremony was performed, Cedric arose, and, extending his hand to Richard, conducted him into a small and very rude chapel, which was excavated, as it were, out of one of the external buttresses. As there was no opening, saving a very narrow loop-hole, the place would have been nearly quite dark but for two flambeaux or torches, which showed, by a red and smoky light, the arched roof and naked walls, the rude altar of stone, and the crucifix of the same material.

Before this altar was placed a bier; and on each side of this bier kneeled three priests, who told their beads and muttered their prayers with the greatest signs of external devotion. For this service a splendid *soul-scat* was paid to the Convent of St. Edmund's by the mother of the deceased; and that it might be fully deserved, the whole brethren, saving the lame sacristan, had transferred themselves to Coningsburgh, where, while six of their number were constantly on guard in the performance of divine rites by the bier of Athelstane, the others failed not to take their share of the refreshments and amusements which went on at the castle. In maintaining this pious watch and ward, the good monks were particularly careful not to interrupt their hymns for an instant, lest Zernebock, the ancient Saxon Apollyon,[1] should lay his clutches on the departed Athelstane. Nor were they less careful to prevent any unhallowed layman from touching the pall, which, having been that used at the funeral of St. Edmund, was liable to be desecrated if handled by the profane. If, in truth, these attentions could be of any use to the deceased, he had some right to expect them at the hands of the brethren of St. Edmund's, since, besides a hundred mancuses of gold paid down as the soul-ransom, the mother of Athelstane had announced her intention of endowing that foundation with the better part of the lands of the deceased, in order to maintain perpetual prayers for his soul and that of her departed husband.

Richard and Wilfred followed the Saxon Cedric into the apart-

[1] In the Hebrew, *Abaddon;* Greek, *Apolluon* (see Revelation ix. 11), the angel of the bottomless pit (see also Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress).

ment of death, where, as their guide pointed with solemn air to the untimely bier of Athelstane, they followed his example in devoutly crossing themselves, and muttering a brief prayer for the weal of the departed soul.

This act of pious charity performed, Cedric again motioned them to follow him, gliding over the stone floor with a noiseless tread, and, after ascending a few steps, opened with great caution the door of a small oratory which adjoined to the chapel. It was about eight feet square; hollowed, like the chapel itself, out of the thickness of the wall; and the loop-hole which enlightened it being to the west, and widening considerably as it sloped inward, a beam of the setting sun found its way into its dark recess, and showed a female of a dignified mien, and whose countenance retained the marked remains of majestic beauty. Her long mourning robes and her flowing wimple[1] of black cypress[2] enhanced the whiteness of her skin and the beauty of her light-colored and flowing tresses, which time had neither thinned nor mingled with silver. Her countenance expressed the deepest sorrow that is consistent with resignation. On the stone table before her stood a crucifix of ivory, beside which was laid a missal, having its pages richly illuminated, and its boards[3] adorned with clasps of gold, and bosses[4] of the same precious metal.

"Noble Edith," said Cedric, after having stood a moment silent, as if to give Richard and Wilfred time to look upon the lady of the mansion, "these are worthy strangers, come to take a part in thy sorrows; and this, in especial, is the valiant knight who fought so bravely for the deliverance of him for whom we this day mourn."

"His bravery has my thanks," returned the lady, "although it be the will of Heaven that it should be displayed in vain. I thank, too, his courtesy, and that of his companion, which hath brought them hither to behold the widow of Adeling, the mother of Athelstane, in her deep hour of sorrow and lamentation. To

[1] A covering, worn by women, for the neck and chin.
[2] Crape. [3] Covers. [4] Ornamental studs.

your care, kind kinsman, I intrust them, satisfied that they will want no hospitality which these sad walls can yet afford."

The guests bowed deeply to the mourning parent, and withdrew with their hospitable guide.

Another winding stair conducted them to an apartment of the same size with that which they had first entered, occupying indeed the story immediately above. From this room, ere yet the door was opened, proceeded a low and melancholy strain of vocal music. When they entered, they found themselves in the presence of about twenty matrons and maidens of distinguished Saxon lineage. Four maidens, Rowena leading the choir, raised a hymn for the soul of the deceased, of which we have only been able to decipher two or three stanzas:—

Dust unto dust,
To this all must;
The tenant hath resigned
The faded form
To waste and worm —
Corruption claims her kind.

Through paths unknown
Thy soul hath flown,
To seek the realms of woe,
Where fiery pain
Shall purge the stain
Of actions done below.

In that sad place,
By Mary's grace,
Brief may thy dwelling be!
Till prayers and alms,
And holy psalms,
Shall set the captive free.

While this dirge was sung in a low and melancholy tone by the female choristers, the others were divided into two bands, of

which one was engaged in bedecking, with such embroidery as their skill and taste could compass, a large silken pall destined to cover the bier of Athelstane, while the others busied themselves in selecting, from baskets of flowers placed before them, garlands, which they intended for the same mournful purpose. The behavior of the maidens was decorous, if not marked with deep affliction; but now and then a whisper or a smile called forth the rebuke of the severer matrons, and here and there might be seen a damsel more interested in endeavoring to find out how her mourning robe became her than in the dismal ceremony for which they were preparing. Neither was this propensity at all diminished by the appearance of two strange knights, which occasioned some looking-up, peeping, and whispering. Rowena alone, too proud to be vain, paid her greeting to her deliverer with a graceful courtesy. Her demeanor was serious but not dejected; and it may be doubted whether thoughts of Ivanhoe, and of the uncertainty of his fate, did not claim as great a share in her gravity as the death of her kinsman.

To Cedric, however, who, as we have observed, was not remarkably clear-sighted on such occasions, the sorrow of his ward seemed so much deeper than any of the other maidens, that he deemed it proper to whisper the explanation, "She was the affianced bride of the noble Athelstane." It may be doubted whether this communication went a far way to increase Wilfred's disposition to sympathize with the mourners of Coningsburgh.

Having thus formally introduced the guests to the different chambers in which the obsequies of Athelstane were celebrated under different forms, Cedric conducted them into a small room, destined, as he informed them, for the exclusive accommodation of honorable guests, whose more slight connection with the deceased might render them unwilling to join those who were immediately affected by the unhappy event. He assured them of every accommodation, and was about to withdraw when the Black Knight took his hand.

"I crave to remind you, noble thane," he said, "that when we

last parted, you promised, for the service I had the fortune to render you, to grant me a boon."

"It is granted ere named, noble knight," said Cedric; "yet at this sad moment"—

"Of that also," said the King, "I have bethought me, but my time is brief; neither does it seem to me unfit, that, when closing the grave on the noble Athelstane, we should deposit therein certain prejudices and hasty opinions."

"Sir Knight of the Fetterlock," said Cedric, coloring, and interrupting the King in his turn, "I trust your boon regards yourself, and no other; for, in that which concerns the honor of my house, it is scarce fitting that a stranger should mingle."

"Nor do I wish to mingle," said the King mildly, "unless in so far as you will admit me to have an interest. As yet you have known me but as the Black Knight of the Fetterlock. Know me now as Richard Plantagenet."

"Richard of Anjou!" exclaimed Cedric, stepping backward with the utmost astonishment.

"No, noble Cedric, Richard of England, whose deepest interest, whose deepest wish, is to see her sons united with each other. And how now, worthy thane? Hast thou no knee for thy prince?"

"To Norman blood," said Cedric, "it hath never bended."

"Reserve thine homage, then," said the monarch, "until I shall prove my right to it by my equal protection of Normans and English."

"Prince," answered Cedric, "I have ever done justice to thy bravery and thy worth. Nor am I ignorant of thy claim to the crown through thy descent from Matilda, niece to Edgar Atheling,[1] and daughter to Malcolm of Scotland; but Matilda, though of the royal Saxon blood, was not the heir to the monarchy."

[1] Born about 1057, and died about 1120; son of Edward, the son of Edmund Ironside. When Edward the Confessor died, he was the nearest heir to the throne. In 1068 he withdrew, with his two sisters, from the court of William the Conqueror, and went to Scotland, where King Malcolm married Margaret, one of the sisters.

"I will not dispute my title with thee, noble thane," said Richard calmly; "but I will bid thee look around thee, and see where thou wilt find another to be put into the scale against it."

"And hast thou wandered hither, prince, to tell me so?" said Cedric, — "to upbraid me with the ruin of my race ere the grave has closed o'er the last scion of Saxon royalty?" His countenance darkened as he spoke. "It was boldly, it was rashly done!"

"Not so, by the holy rood!" replied the King. "It was done in the frank confidence which one brave man may repose in another, without a shadow of danger."

"Thou sayest well, Sir King; for King I own thou art, and wilt be, despite of my feeble opposition. I dare not take the only mode to prevent it, though thou hast placed the strong temptation within my reach!"

"And now to my boon," said the King, "which I ask not with one jot the less confidence that thou hast refused to acknowledge my lawful sovereignty. I require of thee, as a man of thy word, on pain of being held faithless, mansworn, and *nidering*, to forgive and receive to thy paternal affection the good knight Wilfred of Ivanhoe. In this reconciliation thou wilt own I have an interest, — the happiness of my friend, and the quelling of dissension among my faithful people."

"And this is Wilfred!" said Cedric, pointing to his son.

"My father, my father!" said Ivanhoe, prostrating himself at Cedric's feet, "grant me thy forgiveness!"

"Thou hast it, my son," said Cedric, raising him up. "The son of Hereward knows how to keep his word, even when it has been passed to a Norman. But let me see thee use the dress and costume of thy English ancestry, — no short cloaks, no gay bonnets, no fantastic plumage, in my decent household. He that would be the son of Cedric must show himself of English ancestry. Thou art about to speak," he added sternly, "and I guess the topic. The Lady Rowena must complete two years' mourning, as for a betrothed husband. All our Saxon ancestors would dis-

own us were we to treat of a new union for her ere the grave of him she should have wedded — him, so much the most worthy of her hand by birth and ancestry — is yet closed. The ghost of Athelstane himself would burst his bloody cerements, and stand before us to forbid such dishonor to his memory."

It seemed as if Cedric's words had raised a specter; for scarce had he uttered them, ere the door flew open, and Athelstane, arrayed in the garments of the grave, stood before them, pale, haggard, and like something arisen from the dead.

The effect of this apparition on the persons present was utterly appalling. Cedric started back as far as the wall of the apartment would permit, and, leaning against it as one unable to support himself, gazed on the figure of his friend with eyes that seemed fixed, and a mouth which he appeared incapable of shutting. Ivanhoe crossed himself, repeating prayers in Saxon, Latin, or Norman-French, as they occurred to his memory; while Richard alternately said *Benedicite*, and swore *Mort de ma vie!*[1]

In the mean time a horrible noise was heard below stairs; some crying, "Secure the treacherous monks!" others, "Down with them into the dungeon!" others, "Pitch them from the highest battlements!"

"In the name of God!" said Cedric, addressing what seemed the specter of his departed friend, "if thou art mortal, speak! If a departed spirit, say for what cause thou dost revisit us, or if I can do aught that can set thy spirit at repose! Living or dead, noble Athelstane, speak to Cedric!"

"I will," said the specter very composedly, "when I have collected breath, and when you give me time. Alive, saidst thou? I am as much alive as he can be who has fed on bread and water for three days, which seem three ages. Yes, bread and water, Father Cedric! By Heaven, and all saints in it, better food hath not passed my weasand[2] for three livelong days; and by God's providence it is that I am now here to tell it."

[1] "Death of my life." [2] Windpipe; throat.

"Why, noble Athelstane," said the Black Knight, "I myself saw you struck down by the fierce Templar towards the end of the storm at Torquilstone; and as I thought, and Wamba reported, your skull was cloven through the teeth."

"You thought amiss, Sir Knight," said Athelstane, "and Wamba lied. My teeth are in good order, and that my supper shall presently find; no thanks to the Templar, though, whose sword turned in his hand, so that the blade struck me flatlings,[1] being averted by the handle of the good mace with which I warded the blow. Had my steel cap been on, I had not valued it a rush, and had dealt him such a counter-buff as would have spoilt his retreat; but as it was, down I went, stunned, indeed, but unwounded. Others, of both sides, were beaten down and slaughtered above me, so that I never recovered my senses until I found myself in a coffin (an open one, by good luck) placed before the altar of the Church of St. Edmund's. I sneezed repeatedly, groaned, awakened, and would have arisen, when the sacristan and abbot, full of terror, came running at the noise, surprised, doubtless, and no way pleased to find the man alive whose heirs they had proposed themselves to be. I asked for wine. They gave me some, but it must have been highly medicated; for I slept yet more deeply than before, and wakened not for many hours. I found my arms swathed down, my feet tied so fast that mine ankles ache at the very remembrance. The place was utterly dark, — the *oubliette*,[2] as I suppose, of their accursed convent; and from the close, stifled, damp smell, I conceive it is also used for a place of sepulture. I had strange thoughts of what had befallen me, when the door of my dungeon creaked, and two villain monks entered. They would have persuaded me I was in purgatory, but I knew too well the pursy, short-breathed voice of the father abbot. St. Jeremy! how different from that tone with which he used to ask me for another

1 Sideways; with the flat side.

2 A dungeon, especially one, as its name implies (*oublier*, "to forget"), in which persons were left to perpetual imprisonment or to perish secretly.

slice of the haunch! The dog has feasted with me from Christmas to Twelfth Night."[1]

"Have patience, noble Athelstane," said the King. "Take breath. Tell your story at leisure. Beshrew me but such a tale is as well worth listening to as a romance."

"Ay, but, by the rood of Bromeholm, there was no romance in the matter!" said Athelstane. "A barley-loaf and a pitcher of water, — that *they* gave me, the niggardly traitors, whom my father, and I myself, had enriched, when their best resources were the flitches of bacon and measures of corn out of which they wheedled poor serfs and bondsmen in exchange for their prayers, the nest of foul, ungrateful vipers! Barley-bread and ditch water to such a patron as I had been! I will smoke them out of their nest, though I be excommunicated!"

"But in the name of Our Lady, noble Athelstane," said Cedric, grasping the hand of his friend, "how didst thou escape this imminent danger? Did their hearts relent?"

"Did their hearts relent!" echoed Athelstane. "Do rocks melt with the sun? I should have been there still had not some stir in the convent, which I find was their procession hitherward to eat my funeral feast, when they well knew how and where I had been buried alive, summoned the swarm out of their hive. I heard them droning out their death-psalms, little judging they were sung in respect for my soul by those who were thus famishing my body. They went, however, and I waited long for food. No wonder! the gouty sacristan was even too busy with his own provender to mind mine. At length down he came with an unstable step, and a strong flavor of wine and spices about his person. Good cheer had opened his heart, for he left me a nook of pasty and a flask of wine, instead of my former fare. I ate, drank, and was invigorated, when, to add to my good luck, the sacristan, too totty to discharge his duty of turnkey fitly, locked the door beside the staple, so that it fell ajar. The light, the food, the wine, set my invention to work. The staple to which

[1] Epiphany evening, twelfth day after Christmas.

my chains were fixed was more rusted than I or the villain abbot had supposed. Even iron could not remain without consuming in the damps of that infernal dungeon."

"Take breath, noble Athelstane," said Richard, "and partake of some refreshment, ere you proceed with a tale so dreadful."

"Partake!" quoth Athelstane. "I have been partaking five times to-day, and yet a morsel of that savory ham were not altogether foreign to the matter; and I pray you, fair sir, to do me reason in a cup of wine."

The guests, though still agape with astonishment, pledged their resuscitated landlord, who thus proceeded in his story. He had indeed now many more auditors than those to whom it was commenced; for Edith, having given certain necessary orders for arranging matters within the castle, had followed the dead-alive up to the stranger's apartment, attended by as many of the guests, male and female, as could squeeze into the small room, while others, crowding the staircase, caught up an erroneous edition of the story, and transmitted it still more inaccurately to those beneath, who again sent it forth to the vulgar without, in a fashion totally irreconcilable to the real fact. Athelstane, however, went on as follows with the history of his escape: —

"Finding myself freed from the staple, I dragged myself upstairs as well as a man loaded with shackles and emaciated with fasting might; and, after much groping about, I was at length directed by the sound of a jolly roundelay to the apartment where the worthy sacristan was carousing with a huge, beetle-browed, broad-shouldered brother of the gray frock and cowl, who looked much more like a thief than a clergyman. I burst in upon them; and the fashion of my grave-clothes, as well as the clanking of my chains, made me more resemble an inhabitant of the other world than of this. Both stood aghast; but, when I knocked down the sacristan with my fist, the other fellow, his pot-companion, fetched a blow at me with a huge quarter-staff."

"This must be our Friar Tuck, for a count's ransom," said Richard, looking at Ivanhoe.

"He may be the Devil, an he will," said Athelstane. "Fortunately he missed the aim, and, on my approaching to grapple with him, took to his heels and ran for it. I failed not to set my own heels at liberty by means of the fetter-key[1] which hung amongst others at the sexton's belt; and I had thoughts of beating out the knave's brains with the bunch of keys, but gratitude for the nook of pasty and the flask of wine which the rascal had imparted to my captivity came over my heart: so, with a brace of hearty kicks, I left him on the floor, pouched some baked meat and a leathern bottle of wine, with which the two venerable brethren had been regaling, went to the stable, and found in a private stall mine own best palfrey, which, doubtless, had been set apart for the holy father abbot's particular use. Hither I came with all the speed the beast could compass; man and mother's son flying before me wherever I came, taking me for a specter, the more especially, as, to prevent my being recognized, I drew the corpse-hood over my face. I had not gained admittance into my own castle had I not been supposed to be the attendant of a juggler who is making the people in the castle-yard very merry, considering they are assembled to celebrate their lord's funeral. I say the sewer thought I was dressed to bear a part in the tregetour's[2] mummery; and so I got admission, and did but disclose myself to my mother, and eat a hasty morsel, ere I came in quest of you, my noble friend."

"And you have found me," said Cedric, "ready to resume our brave projects of honor and liberty. I tell thee, never will dawn a morrow so auspicious as the next for the deliverance of the noble Saxon race."

"Talk not to me of delivering any one," said Athelstane. "It is well I am delivered myself. I am more intent on punishing that villain abbot. He shall hang on the top of this castle of Coningsburgh in his cope and stole; and, if the stairs be too strait to admit his fat carcass, I will have him craned[3] up from without."

[1] Key for a fetterlock. [2] Juggler's.
[3] Hoisted by a crane or derrick.

"But, my son," said Edith, "consider his sacred office."

"Consider my three days' fast," replied Athelstane. "I will have their blood, every one of them. Front-de-Bœuf was burnt alive for a less matter, for he kept a good table for his prisoners, only put too much garlic in his last dish of pottage; but these hypocritical, ungrateful slaves, so often the self-invited flatterers at my board, who gave me neither pottage nor garlic, more or less, they die, by the soul of Hengist!"

"But the Pope, my noble friend," said Cedric.

"But, my noble friend," answered Athelstane, "they die, and no more of them. Were they the best monks upon earth, the world would go on without them."

"For shame, noble Athelstane!" said Cedric. "Forget such wretches in the career of glory which lies open before thee. Tell this Norman prince, Richard of Anjou, that, lion-hearted as he is, he shall not hold undisputed the throne of Alfred while a male descendant of the holy Confessor lives to dispute it."

"How!" said Athelstane, "is this the noble King Richard?"

"It is Richard Plantagenet himself," said Cedric; "yet I need not remind thee, that, coming hither a guest of free will, he may neither be injured nor detained prisoner. Thou well knowest thy duty to him as his host."

"Ay, by my faith!" said Athelstane; "and my duty as a subject besides, for I here tender him my allegiance, heart and hand."

"My son," said Edith, "think on thy royal rights!"

"Think on the freedom of England, degenerate prince!" said Cedric.

"Mother and friend," said Athelstane, "a truce to your upbraidings! Bread and water and a dungeon are marvelous mortifiers of ambition, and I rise from the tomb a wiser man than I descended into it. One half of those vain follies were puffed into my ear by that perfidious abbot Wolfram, and you may now judge if he is a counselor to be trusted. Since these plots were set in agitation, I have had nothing but hurried journeys, indi-

gestions, blows and bruises, imprisonments and starvation; besides that, they can only end in the murder of some thousands of quiet folk. I tell you, I will be king in my own domains, and nowhere else; and my first act of dominion shall be to hang the abbot."

"And my ward, Rowena," said Cedric. "I trust you intend not to desert her?"

"Father Cedric," said Athelstane, "be reasonable. The Lady Rowena cares not for me. She loves the little finger of my kinsman Wilfred's glove better than my whole person. There she stands to avouch it. — Nay, blush not, kinswoman, there is no shame in loving a courtly knight better than a country franklin. And do not laugh, neither, Rowena, for grave-clothes and a thin visage are, God knows, no matter of merriment. Nay, an thou wilt needs laugh, I will find thee a better jest. Give me thy hand, or rather lend it me, for I but ask it in the way of friendship. — Here, cousin Wilfred of Ivanhoe, in thy favor I renounce and abjure — Hey! by St. Dunstan, our cousin Wilfred hath vanished! Yet, unless my eyes are still dazzled with the fasting I have undergone, I saw him stand there but even now."

All now looked round and inquired for Ivanhoe, but he had vanished. It was at length discovered that a Jew had been to seek him, and that, after very brief conference, he had called for Gurth and his armor, and had left the castle.

"Fair cousin," said Athelstane to Rowena, "could I think that this sudden disappearance of Ivanhoe was occasioned by other than the weightiest reason, I would myself resume" —

But he had no sooner let go her hand, on first observing that Ivanhoe had disappeared, than Rowena, who had found her situation extremely embarrassing, had taken the first opportunity to escape from the apartment.

"Certainly," quoth Athelstane, "women are the least to be trusted of all animals, monks and abbots excepted. I am an infidel, if I expected not thanks from her, and perhaps a kiss to boot. These cursed grave-clothes have surely a spell on them: every

one flies from me. To you I turn, noble King Richard, with the vows of allegiance, which, as a liege subject"—

But King Richard was gone also, and no one knew whither. At length it was learned that he had hastened to the courtyard, summoned to his presence the Jew who had spoken with Ivanhoe, and, after a moment's speech with him, had called vehemently to horse, thrown himself upon a steed, compelled the Jew to mount another, and set off at a rate which, according to Wamba, rendered the old Jew's neck not worth a penny's purchase.

"By my halidom!" said Athelstane, "it is certain that Zernebock hath possessed himself of my castle in my absence. I return in my grave-clothes, a pledge restored from the very sepulcher, and every one I speak to vanishes as soon as they hear my voice! But it skills not talking of it. Come, my friends, such of you as are left, follow me to the banquet-hall, lest any more of us disappear. It is, I trust, as yet tolerably furnished, as becomes the obsequies of an ancient Saxon noble; and, should we tarry any longer, who knows but the Devil may fly off with the supper."[1]

CHAPTER XLIII.

OUR scene now returns to the exterior of the castle, or preceptory, of Templestowe, about the hour when the bloody die was to be cast for the life or death of Rebecca. It was a scene of bustle and life, as if the whole vicinity had poured forth its inhabitants to a village wake or rural feast.

The eyes of a very considerable multitude were bent on the

[1] The resuscitation of Athelstane has been much criticised as too violent a breach of probability even for a work of such fantastic character. It was a *tour-de-force*, to which the author was compelled to have recourse by the vehement entreaties of his friend and printer, who was inconsolable on the Saxon being conveyed to the tomb.

gate of the Preceptory of Templestowe with the purpose of witnessing the procession, while still greater numbers had already surrounded the tilt-yard belonging to that establishment. This inclosure was formed on a piece of level ground adjoining to the preceptory, which had been leveled with care for the exercise of military and chivalrous sports. It occupied the brow of a soft and gentle eminence, was carefully palisaded around, and, as the Templars willingly invited spectators to be witnesses of their skill in feats of chivalry, was amply supplied with galleries and benches for their use.

On the present occasion a throne was erected for the Grand Master at the east end, surrounded with seats of distinction for the preceptors, and knights of the order. Over these floated the sacred standard, called *Le Beau-seant*, which was the ensign, as its name was the battle-cry, of the Templars.

At the opposite end of the lists was a pile of fagots, so arranged around a stake, deeply fixed in the ground, as to leave a space for the victim whom they were destined to consume, to enter within the fatal circle, in order to be chained to the stake by the fetters which hung ready for the purpose. Beside this deadly apparatus stood four black slaves, whose color and African features, then so little known in England, appalled the multitude, who gazed on them as on demons employed about their own diabolical exercises. These men stirred not, excepting now and then, under the direction of one who seemed their chief, to shift and replace the ready fuel. They looked not on the multitude: in fact, they seemed insensible of their presence, and of everything save the discharge of their own horrible duty; and when, in speech with each other, they expanded their blubber lips and showed their white fangs, as if they grinned at the thoughts of the expected tragedy, the startled commons could scarcely help believing that they were actually the familiar spirits with whom the witch had communed, and who, her time being out, stood ready to assist in her dreadful punishment. They whispered to each other, and communicated all the feats which Satan had performed during

that busy and unhappy period; not failing, of course, to give the Devil rather more than his due.

"Have you not heard, Father Dennet," quoth one boor to another advanced in years, "that the Devil has carried away bodily the great Saxon thane, Athelstane of Coningsburgh?"

"Ay, but he brought him back, though, by the blessing of God and St. Dunstan."

"How's that?" said a brisk young fellow, dressed in a green cassock embroidered with gold, and having at his heels a stout lad bearing a harp upon his back, which betrayed his vocation. The minstrel seemed of no vulgar rank; for, besides the splendor of his gayly broidered doublet, he wore around his neck a silver chain, by which hung the *wrest*, or key, with which he tuned his harp. On his right arm was a silver plate, which, instead of bearing, as usual, the cognizance or badge of the baron to whose family he belonged, had barely the word "Sherwood" engraved upon it. "How mean you by that?" said the gay minstrel, mingling in the conversation of the peasants. "I came to seek one subject for my rhyme, and, by'r Lady, I were glad to find two."

"It is well avouched," said the elder peasant, "that after Athelstane of Coningsburgh had been dead four weeks"—

"That is impossible," said the minstrel. "I saw him in life at the passage of arms at Ashby-de-la-Zouche."

"Dead, however, he was, or else translated," said the younger peasant; "for I heard the monks of St. Edmund's singing the death's hymn for him; and, moreover, there was a rich death-meal and dole[1] at the castle of Coningsburgh, as right was; and thither had I gone but for Mabel Parkins, who"—

"Ay, dead was Athelstane," said the old man, shaking his head; "and the more pity it was for the old Saxon blood"—

"But your story, my masters — your story," said the minstrel somewhat impatiently.

"Ay, ay! construe us the story," said a burly friar who stood

[1] Gifts.

beside them, leaning on a pole that exhibited an appearance between a pilgrim's staff and a quarter-staff, and probably acted as either when occasion served. "Your story," said the stalwart churchman. "Burn not daylight about it: we have short time to spare."

"An please your Reverence," said Dennet, "a drunken priest came to visit the sacristan at St. Edmund's"—

"It does not please my reverence," answered the churchman, "that a layman should so speak him. Be mannerly, my friend, and conclude the holy man only rapt in meditation."

"Well, then," answered Father Dennet, "a holy brother came to visit the sacristan at St. Edmund's. A sort of hedge-priest is the visitor, and kills half the deer that are stolen in the forest, who loves the tinkling of a pint-pot better than the sacring-bell,[1] and deems a flitch of bacon worth ten of his breviary; for the rest, a good fellow and a merry, who will flourish a quarter-staff, draw a bow, and dance a Cheshire round with e'er a man in Yorkshire."

"That last part of thy speech, Dennet," said the minstrel, "has saved thee a rib or twain."

"Tush, man, I fear him not," said Dennet. "I am somewhat old and stiff, but when I fought for the bell and ram at Doncaster"—

"But the story—the story, my friend," again said the minstrel.

"Why, the tale is but this: Athelstane of Coningsburgh was buried at St. Edmund's."

"That's a lie, and a loud one," said the friar, "for I saw him borne to his own castle of Coningsburgh."

"Nay, then, e'en tell the story yourself, my masters," said Dennet, turning sulky at these repeated contradictions; and it was with some difficulty that the boor could be prevailed on, by the request of his comrade and the minstrel, to renew his tale. "These two *sober* friars," said he at length, "since this reverend man will needs have them such, had continued drinking good ale

[1] Sanctus bell, used in the service of mass or communion.

and wine, and what not, for the best part of a summer's day, when they were aroused by a deep groan and a clanking of chains; and the figure of the deceased Athelstane entered the apartment, saying, 'Ye evil shepherds!'"—

"It is false," said the friar hastily: "he never spoke a word."

"So ho! Friar Tuck," said the minstrel, drawing him apart from the rustics. "We have started a new hare, I find."

"I tell thee, Allan-a-Dale," said the hermit, "I saw Athelstane of Coningsburgh as much as bodily eyes ever saw a living man. He had his shroud on, and all about him smelt of the sepulcher. A butt of sack will not wash it out of my memory."

"Pshaw!" answered the minstrel, "thou dost but jest with me!"

"Never believe me," said the friar, "an I fetched not a knock at him with my quarter-staff that would have felled an ox, and it glided through his body as it might through a pillar of smoke!"

"By St. Hubert," said the minstrel, "but it is a wondrous tale, and fit to be put in meter to the ancient tune, 'Sorrow came to the Old Friar.'"

"Laugh, if ye list," said Friar Tuck; "but an ye catch me singing on such a theme, may the next ghost or devil carry me off with him headlong! No, no! I instantly formed the purpose of assisting at some good work, such as the burning of a witch, a judicial combat, or the like matter of godly service, and therefore am I here."

As they thus conversed, the heavy bell of the Church of St. Michael of Templestowe, a venerable building situated in a hamlet at some distance from the preceptory, broke short their argument. One by one the sullen sounds fell successively on the ear, leaving but sufficient space for each to die away in distant echo, ere the ear was again filled by repetition of the iron knell. These sounds, the signal of the approaching ceremony, chilled with awe the hearts of the assembled multitude, whose eyes were now turned to the preceptory, expecting the approach of the Grand Master, the champion, and the criminal.

At length the drawbridge fell, the gates opened, and a knight, bearing the great standard of the order, sallied from the castle, preceded by six trumpets, and followed by the knights preceptors, two and two; the Grand Master coming last, mounted on a stately horse, whose furniture was of the simplest kind. Behind him came Brian de Bois-Guilbert, armed *cap-a-pie* in bright armor, but without his lance, shield, and sword, which were borne by his two esquires behind him. His face, though partly hidden by a long plume which floated down from his barret-cap,[1] bore a strong and mingled expression of passion, in which pride seemed to contend with irresolution. He looked ghastly pale, as if he had not slept for several nights, yet reined his pawing war-horse with the habitual ease and grace proper to the best lance of the Order of the Temple. His general appearance was grand and commanding; but, looking at him with attention, men read that in his dark features from which they willingly withdrew their eyes.

On either side rode Conrade of Mont-Fitchet and Albert de Malvoisin, who acted as godfathers to the champion. They were in their robes of peace, the white dress of the order. Behind them followed other Companions of the Temple, with a long train of esquires and pages clad in black, aspirants to the honor of being one day knights of the order. After these neophytes came a guard of warders on foot, in the same sable livery, amidst whose partisans might be seen the pale form of the accused, moving with a slow but undismayed step towards the scene of her fate. She was stripped of all her ornaments, lest perchance there should be among them some of those amulets which Satan was supposed to bestow upon his victims, to deprive them of the power of confession even when under the torture. A coarse white dress, of the simplest form, had been substituted for her Oriental garments; yet there was such an exquisite mixture of courage and resignation in her look, that even in this garb, and with no other ornament than her long black tresses,

[1] A flat cap worn by dignitaries of the church.

each eye wept that looked upon her, and the most hardened bigot regretted the fate that had converted a creature so goodly into a vessel of wrath.

A crowd of inferior personages belonging to the preceptory followed the victim, all moving with the utmost order, with arms folded, and looks bent upon the ground.

This slow procession moved up the gentle eminence, on the summit of which was the tilt-yard, and, entering the lists, marched once around them from right to left, and, when they had completed the circle, made a halt. There was then a momentary bustle; while the Grand Master and all his attendants, excepting the champion and his godfathers, dismounted from their horses, which were immediately removed out of the lists by the esquires, who were in attendance for that purpose.

The unfortunate Rebecca was conducted to the black chair placed near the pile. On her first glance at the terrible spot where preparations were making for a death alike dismaying to the mind and painful to the body, she was observed to shudder and shut her eyes, praying internally, doubtless, for her lips moved, though no speech was heard. In the space of a minute she opened her eyes, looked fixedly on the pile as if to familiarize her mind with the object, and then slowly and naturally turned away her head.

Meanwhile the Grand Master had assumed his seat; and when the chivalry of his order was placed around and behind him, each in his due rank, a loud and long flourish of the trumpets announced that the Court were seated for judgment. Malvoisin then, acting as godfather of the champion, stepped forward and laid the glove of the Jewess, which was the pledge of battle, at the feet of the Grand Master.

"Valorous lord and reverend father," said he, "here standeth the good knight, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, knight preceptor of the Order of the Temple, who, by accepting the pledge of battle which I now lay at your Reverence's feet, hath become bound to do his devoir in combat this day, to maintain that this Jewish

maiden, by name Rebecca, hath justly deserved the doom passed upon her in a chapter of this most holy Order of the Temple of Zion, condemning her to die as a sorceress, — here, I say, he standeth, such battle to do, knightly and honorable, if such be your noble and sanctified pleasure."

"Hath he made oath," said the Grand Master, "that his quarrel is just and honorable? Bring forward the crucifix and the *Te igitur*."[1]

"Sir, and most reverend father," answered Malvoisin readily, "our brother here present hath already sworn to the truth of his accusation in the hand of the good knight Conrade de Mont-Fitchet; and otherwise he ought not to be sworn, seeing that his adversary is an unbeliever, and may take no oath."

This explanation was satisfactory, to Albert's great joy; for the wily knight had foreseen the great difficulty, or rather impossibility, of prevailing upon Brian de Bois-Guilbert to take such an oath before the assembly, and had invented this excuse to escape the necessity of his doing so.

The Grand Master, having allowed the apology of Albert Malvoisin, commanded the herald to stand forth and do his devoir. The trumpets then again flourished, and a herald, stepping forward, proclaimed aloud, "Oyez,[2] oyez, oyez. Here standeth the good knight, Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, ready to do battle with any knight of free blood, who will sustain the quarrel allowed and allotted to the Jewess Rebecca, to try by champion, in respect of lawful essoine of her own body; and to such champion the reverend and valorous Grand Master here present allows a fair field, and equal partition of sun and wind, and whatever else appertains to a fair combat." The trumpets again sounded, and there was a dead pause of many minutes.

"No champion appears for the appellant," said the Grand Master. "Go, herald, and ask her whether she expects any one to do battle for her in this her cause." The herald went to

[1] "Thou therefore," — a religious service book upon which solemn oaths were taken.

[2] "Hear ye."

the chair in which Rebecca was seated; and Bois-Guilbert, suddenly turning his horse's head towards that end of the lists, in spite of hints on either side from Malvoisin and Mont-Fitchet, was by the side of Rebecca's chair as soon as the herald.

"Is this regular, and according to the law of combat?" said Malvoisin, looking to the Grand Master.

"Albert de Malvoisin, it is," answered Beaumanoir; "for, in this appeal to the judgment of God, we may not prohibit parties from having that communication with each other which may best tend to bring forth the truth of the quarrel."

In the mean time the herald spoke to Rebecca in these terms: "Damsel, the honorable and reverend the Grand Master demands of thee, if thou art prepared with a champion to do battle this day in thy behalf, or if thou dost yield thee as one justly condemned to a deserved doom."

"Say to the Grand Master," replied Rebecca, "that I do not yield me as justly condemned. Say to him that I challenge such delay as his forms will permit, to see if God, whose opportunity is in man's extremity, will raise me up a deliverer; and when such uttermost space is passed, may His holy will be done!" The herald retired to carry this answer to the Grand Master.

"God forbid," said Lucas Beaumanoir, "that Jew or Pagan should impeach us of injustice! Until the shadows be cast from the west to the eastward, will we wait to see if a champion shall appear for this unfortunate woman. When the day is so far passed, let her prepare for death."

The herald communicated the words of the Grand Master to Rebecca, who bowed her head submissively, folded her arms, and, looking up towards heaven, seemed to expect that aid from above which she could scarce promise herself from man. During this awful pause the voice of Bois-Guilbert broke upon her ear. It was but a whisper, yet it startled her more than the summons of the herald had appeared to do.

"Rebecca," said the Templar, "dost thou hear me?"

"I have no portion in thee, cruel, hard-hearted man," said the unfortunate maiden.

"Ay, but dost thou understand my words?" said the Templar, "for the sound of my voice is frightful in mine own ears. I scarce know on what ground we stand, or for what purpose they have brought us hither. This listed space, that chair, these fagots — I know their purpose; and yet it appears to me like something unreal, — the fearful picture of a vision, which appalls my sense with hideous fantasies, but convinces not my reason."

"My mind and senses keep touch and time," answered Rebecca, "and tell me alike that these fagots are destined to consume my earthly body, and open a painful but a brief passage to a better world."

"Dreams, Rebecca — dreams," answered the Templar. "Hear me, Rebecca," he said, proceeding with animation. "A better chance hast thou for life and liberty than yonder knaves and dotard dream of. Mount thee behind me on my steed, — on Zamor, the gallant horse that never failed his rider. I won him in single fight from the Soldan of Trebizond. Mount, I say, behind me. In one short hour is pursuit and inquiry far behind. Let them speak the doom which I despise, and erase the name of Bois-Guilbert from their list of monastic slaves! I will wash out with blood whatever blot they may dare to cast on my scutcheon."

"Tempter," said Rebecca, "begone! Not in this last extremity canst thou move me one hair's-breadth from my resting-place. Surrounded as I am by foes, I hold thee as my worst and most deadly enemy. Avoid thee, in the name of God!"

Albert Malvoisin, alarmed and impatient at the duration of their conference, now advanced to interrupt it.

"Hath the maiden acknowledged her guilt?" he demanded of Bois-Guilbert, "or is she resolute in her denial?"

"She is indeed *resolute*," said Bois-Guilbert.

"Then," said Malvoisin, "must thou, noble brother, resume thy place to attend the issue. The shades are changing on the

circle of the dial.[1] Come, brave Bois-Guilbert — come, thou hope of our holy order, and soon to be its head."

As he spoke in this soothing tone, he laid his hand on the knight's bridle, as if to lead him back to his station.

"False villain! what meanest thou by thy hand on my rein?" said Sir Brian angrily; and, shaking off his companion's grasp, he rode back to the upper end of the lists.

"There is yet spirit in him," said Malvoisin apart to Mont-Fitchet, "were it well directed; but, like the Greek fire,[2] it burns whatever approaches it."

The judges had now been two hours in the lists, awaiting in vain the appearance of a champion.

"And reason good," said Friar Tuck, "seeing she is a Jewess; and yet, by mine order, it is hard that so young and beautiful a creature should perish without one blow being struck in her behalf! Were she ten times a witch, provided she were but the least bit of a Christian, my quarter-staff should ring noon on the steel cap of yonder fierce Templar ere he carried the matter off thus."

It was, however, the general belief that no one could or would appear for a Jewess accused of sorcery; and the knights, instigated by Malvoisin, whispered to each other that it was time to declare the pledge of Rebecca forfeited. At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain, advancing towards the lists. A hundred voices exclaimed, "A champion, a champion!" And, despite the prepossessions and prejudices of the multitude, they shouted unanimously as the knight rode into the tilt-yard. The second glance, however, served to destroy the hope that his timely arrival had excited. His horse, urged for many miles to its utmost speed, appeared to reel from

[1] "The shades," etc., i.e., the day is wearing on. The circle of the dial refers to the sun-dial.

[2] A substance thought to be made up of asphalt with niter and sulphur. It is combustible, and burns under water. It was used in warfare with considerable effect by the Greeks of the Eastern Empire.

fatigue; and the rider, however undauntedly he presented himself in the lists, either from weakness, weariness, or both, seemed scarce able to support himself in the saddle.

To the summons of the herald who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger knight answered readily and boldly, "I am a good knight, and noble, come hither to sustain with lance and sword the just and lawful quarrel of this damsel, Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York; to uphold the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless; and to defy Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert as a traitor, murderer, and liar, as I will prove in this field with my body against his, by the aid of God, of Our Lady, and of Monseigneur St. George, the good knight."

"The stranger must first show," said Malvoisin, "that he is good knight and of honorable lineage. The Temple sendeth not forth her champions against nameless men."

"My name," said the knight, raising his helmet, "is better known, my lineage more pure, Malvoisin, than thine own. I am Wilfred of Ivanhoe."

"I will not fight with thee at present," said the Templar in a changed and hollow voice. "Get thy wounds healed, purvey thee a better horse, and it may be I will hold it worth my while to scourge out of thee this boyish spirit of bravade."

"Ha! proud Templar," said Ivanhoe, "hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? Remember the lists at Acre; remember the passage of arms at Ashby; remember thy proud vaunt in the halls of Rotherwood, and the gage of your gold chain against my reliquary, that thou wouldst do battle with Wilfred of Ivanhoe, and recover the honor thou hadst lost! By that reliquary, and the holy relic it contains, I will proclaim thee, Templar, a coward in every court in Europe, in every preceptory of thine order, unless thou do battle without further delay."

Bois-Guilbert turned his countenance irresolutely towards Rebecca, and then exclaimed, looking fiercely at Ivanhoe, "Dog

of a Saxon! take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!"

"Does the Grand Master allow me the combat?" said Ivanhoe.

"I may not deny what thou hast challenged," said the Grand Master, "provided the maiden accepts thee as her champion. Yet I would thou wert in better plight to do battle. An enemy of our order hast thou ever been, yet would I have thee honorably met with."

"Thus — thus I am, and not otherwise," said Ivanhoe. "It is the judgment of God. To his keeping I commend myself. — Rebecca," said he, riding up to the fatal chair, "dost thou accept of me for thy champion?"

"I do," she said — "I do," fluttered by an emotion which the fear of death had been unable to produce — "I do accept thee as the champion whom Heaven hath sent me. Yet, no, no! Thy wounds are uncured. Meet not that proud man. Why shouldst thou perish also?"

But Ivanhoe was already at his post, and had closed his visor and assumed his lance. Bois-Guilbert did the same; and his esquire remarked, as he clasped his visor, that his face, which had, notwithstanding the variety of emotions by which he had been agitated, continued during the whole morning of an ashy paleness, was now become suddenly very much flushed.

The herald, then, seeing each champion in his place, uplifted his voice, repeating thrice, "*Faites vos devoirs, preux chevaliers!*"[1] After the third cry he withdrew to one side of the lists, and again proclaimed that none, on peril of instant death, should dare by word, cry, or action, to interfere with or disturb this fair field of combat. The Grand Master, who held in his hand the gage of battle, Rebecca's glove, now threw it into the lists, and pronounced the fatal signal words, "*Laissez aller.*"

The trumpets sounded, and the knights charged each other in full career. The wearied horse of Ivanhoe, and its no less ex-

[1] "Perform your duties, brave knights."

hausted rider, went down, as all had expected, before the well-aimed lance and vigorous steed of the Templar. This issue of the combat all had foreseen; but, although the spear of Ivanhoe did but in comparison touch the shield of Bois-Guilbert, that champion, to the astonishment of all who beheld it, reeled in his saddle, lost his stirrups, and fell in the lists.

Ivanhoe, extricating himself from his fallen horse, was soon on foot, hastening to mend his fortune with his sword; but his antagonist arose not. Wilfred, placing his foot on his breast and the sword's point to his throat, commanded him to yield him, or die on the spot. Bois-Guilbert returned no answer.

"Slay him not, Sir Knight," cried the Grand Master, "unshriven and unabsolved: kill not body and soul! We allow him vanquished."

He descended into the lists, and commanded them to unhelm the conquered champion. His eyes were closed. The dark red flush was still on his brow. As they looked on him in astonishment, the eyes opened, but they were fixed and glazed. The flush passed from his brow, and gave way to the pallid hue of death. Unscathed by the lance of his enemy, he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions.

"This is indeed the judgment of God," said the Grand Master, looking upwards: "*Fiat voluntas tua!*"[1]

CHAPTER XLIV.

WHEN the first moments of surprise were over, Wilfred of Ivanhoe demanded of the Grand Master, as judge of the field, if he had manfully and rightfully done his duty in the combat.

"Manfully and rightfully hath it been done," said the Grand Master. "I pronounce the maiden free. The arms and the body of the deceased knight are at the will of the victor."

[1] "Thy will be done."

"I will not despoil him of his weapons," said the Knight of Ivanhoe, "nor condemn his corpse to shame. He hath fought for Christendom. God's arm, no human hand, hath this day struck him down. But let his obsequies be private, as becomes those of a man who died in an unjust quarrel. And for the maiden"—

He was interrupted by a clattering of horses' feet, advancing in such numbers and so rapidly as to shake the ground before them, and the Black Knight galloped into the lists. He was followed by a numerous band of men-at-arms and several knights in complete armor.

"I am too late," he said, looking around him. "I had doomed Bois-Guilbert for mine own property.—Ivanhoe, was this well, to take on thee such a venture, and thou scarce able to keep thy saddle?"

"Heaven, my liege," answered Ivanhoe, "hath taken this proud man for its victim. He was not to be honored in dying as your will had designed."

"Peace be with him!" said Richard, looking steadfastly on the corpse, "if it may be so. He was a gallant knight, and has died in his steel harness full knightly. But we must waste no time.—Bohun, do thine office!"

A knight stepped forward from the King's attendants, and, laying his hand on the shoulder of Albert de Malvoisin, said, "I arrest thee of high treason."

The Grand Master had hitherto stood astonished at the appearance of so many warriors. He now spoke.

"Who dares to arrest a knight of the Temple of Zion within the girth of his own preceptory, and in the presence of the Grand Master? and by whose authority is this bold outrage offered?"

"I make the arrest," replied the knight—"I, Henry Bohun, Earl of Essex, Lord High Constable of England."

"And he arrests Malvoisin," said the King, raising his visor, "by the order of Richard Plantagenet, here present.—Conrade

Mont-Fitchet, it is well for thee thou art born no subject of mine. — But for thee, Malvoisin, thou diest with thy brother Philip, ere the world be a week older."

"I will resist thy doom," said the Grand Master.

"Proud Templar," said the King, "thou canst not. Look up, and behold the Royal Standard of England floats over thy towers instead of thy Temple banner! Be wise, Beaumanoir, and make no bootless opposition. Thy hand is in the lion's mouth."

"I will appeal to Rome against thee," said the Grand Master, "for usurpation on the immunities and privileges of our order."

"Be it so," said the King; "but for thine own sake, tax me not with usurpation now. Dissolve thy chapter, and depart with thy followers to the next preceptory (if thou canst find one) which has not been made the scene of treasonable conspiracy against the King of England; or, if thou wilt, remain to share our hospitality and behold our justice."

"To be a guest in the house where I should command?" said the Templar. "Never! — Chaplains, raise the psalm "*Quare fremuerunt Gentes?*"[1] — Knights, squires, and followers of the holy Temple, prepare to follow the banner of *Beau-seant!*"

The Grand Master spoke with a dignity which confronted even that of England's King himself, and inspired courage into his surprised and dismayed followers. They gathered around him like the sheep around the watch-dog when they hear the baying of the wolf; but they evinced not the timidity of the scared flock. There were dark brows of defiance, and looks which menaced the hostility they dared not to proffer in words. They drew together in a dark line of spears, from which the white cloaks of the knights were visible among the dusky garments of their retainers, like the lighter-colored edges of a sable cloud. The multitude, who had raised a clamorous shout of reprobation, paused, and gazed in silence on the formidable and experienced body to which they had unwarily bade defiance, and shrunk back from their front.

[1] "Wherefore do the heathen rage?"

The Earl of Essex, when he beheld them pause in their assembled force, dashed the rowels into his charger's sides, and galloped backwards and forwards to array his followers in opposition to a band so formidable. Richard alone, as if he loved the danger his presence had provoked, rode slowly along the front of the Templars, calling aloud, "What, sirs! Among so many gallant knights, will none dare splinter a spear with Richard? Sirs of the Temple, your ladies are but sunburned[1] if they are not worth the shiver of a broken lance!"

"The brethren of the Temple," said the Grand Master, riding forward in advance of their body, "fight not on such idle and profane quarrel. And not with thee, Richard of England, shall a Templar cross lance in my presence. The Pope and princes of Europe shall judge our quarrel, and whether a Christian prince has done well in bucklering the cause which thou hast today adopted. If unassailed, we depart, assailing no one. To thine honor we refer the armor and household goods of the order which we leave behind us, and on thy conscience we lay the scandal and offense thou hast this day given to Christendom."

With these words, and without waiting a reply, the Grand Master gave the signal of departure. Their trumpets sounded a wild march of an Oriental character, which formed the usual signal for the Templars to advance. They changed their array from a line to a column of march, and moved off as slowly as their horses could step, as if to show it was only the will of their Grand Master, and no fear of the opposing and superior force which compelled them to withdraw.

"By the splendor of Our Lady's brow!" said King Richard, "it is pity of their lives that these Templars are not so trusty as they are disciplined and valiant."

The multitude, like a timid cur which waits to bark till the object of its challenge has turned his back, raised a feeble shout as the rear of the squadron left the ground.

During the tumult which attended the retreat of the Templars,

[1] That is, have endured the sun to no purpose.

Rebecca saw and heard nothing. She was locked in the arms of her aged father, giddy, and almost senseless, with the rapid change of circumstances around her. But one word from Isaac at length recalled her scattered feelings.

"Let us go," he said, "my dear daughter, my recovered treasure — let us go to throw ourselves at the feet of the good youth."

"Not so," said Rebecca. "Oh, no, no, no! I must not at this moment dare to speak to him. Alas! I should say more than — No, my father, let us instantly leave this evil place."

"But, my daughter," said Isaac, "to leave him who hath come forth like a strong man with his spear and shield, holding his life as nothing, so he might redeem thy captivity; and thou, too, the daughter of a people strange unto him and his, — this is service to be thankfully acknowledged."

"It is — it is — most thankfully — most devoutly acknowledged," said Rebecca. "It shall be still more so, but not now — for the sake of thy beloved Rachel, father, grant my request — not now."

"Nay, but," said Isaac, insisting, "they will deem us more thankless than mere dogs!"

"But thou seest, my dear father, that King Richard is in presence, and that" —

"True, my best, my wisest Rebecca! Let us hence, let us hence! Money he will lack, for he has just returned from Palestine, and, as they say, from prison; and pretext for exacting it, should he need any, may arise out of my simple traffic with his brother John. Away, away! Let us hence!"

And hurrying his daughter in his turn, he conducted her from the lists, and, by means of conveyance which he had provided, transported her safely to the house of the rabbi Nathan.

The Jewess, whose fortunes had formed the principal interest of the day, having now retired unobserved, the attention of the populace was transferred to the Black Knight. They now filled the air with "Long life to Richard with the lion's heart, and down with the usurping Templars!"

"Notwithstanding all this lip-loyalty," said Ivanhoe to the Earl of Essex, "it was well the King took the precaution to bring thee with him, noble earl, and so many of thy trusty followers."

The earl smiled, and shook his head.

"Gallant Ivanhoe," said Essex, "dost thou know our master so well, and yet suspect him of taking so wise a precaution? I was drawing towards York, having heard that Prince John was making head there, when I met King Richard, like a true knight-errant, galloping hither to achieve in his own person this adventure of the Templar and the Jewess with his own single arm. I accompanied him with my band, almost mauger[1] his consent."

"And what news from York, brave earl?" said Ivanhoe. "Will the rebels bide us there?"

"No more than December's snow will bide July's sun," said the earl. "They are dispersing; and who should come posting to bring us the news but John himself!"

"The traitor! the ungrateful, insolent traitor!" said Ivanhoe. "Did not Richard order him into confinement?"

"Oh! he received him," answered the earl, "as if they had met after a hunting party, and, pointing to me and our men-at-arms, said, 'Thou seest, brother, I have some angry men with me: thou wert best go to our mother, carry her my duteous affection, and abide with her until men's minds are pacified.'"

"And this was all he said?" inquired Ivanhoe. "Would not any one say that this prince invites men to treason by his clemency?"

"Just," replied the earl, "as the man may be said to invite death who undertakes to fight a combat, having a dangerous wound unhealed."

"I forgive thee the jest, Lord Earl," said Ivanhoe: "but, remember, I hazarded but my own life; Richard, the welfare of his kingdom."

"Those," replied Essex, "who are specially careless of their

[1] In spite of.

own welfare, are seldom remarkably attentive to that of others. But let us haste to the castle, for Richard meditates punishing some of the subordinate members of the conspiracy, though he has pardoned their principal."

From the judicial investigations which followed on this occasion, it appears that Maurice de Bracy escaped beyond seas, and went into the service of Philip of France; while Philip de Malvoisin and his brother Albert, the preceptor of Templestowe, were executed, although Waldemar Fitzurse, the soul of the conspiracy, escaped with banishment; and Prince John, for whose behoof it was undertaken, was not even censured by his good-natured brother. No one, however, pitied the fate of the two Malvoisins, who only suffered the death which they had both well deserved by many acts of falsehood, cruelty, and oppression.

Briefly, after the judicial combat, Cedric the Saxon was summoned to the court of Richard, which, for the purpose of quieting the counties that had been disturbed by the ambition of his brother, was then held at York. Cedric tushed and pshawed more than once at the message, but he refused not obedience. In fact, the return of Richard had quenched every hope that he had entertained of restoring a Saxon dynasty in England; for whatever head the Saxons might have made in the event of a civil war, it was plain that nothing could be done under the undisputed dominion of Richard, popular as he was by his personal good qualities and military fame, although his administration was willfully careless, now too indulgent, and now allied to despotism.

But, moreover, it could not escape even Cedric's reluctant observation, that his project for an absolute union among the Saxons by the marriage of Rowena and Athelstane was now completely at an end by the mutual dissent of both parties concerned. This was indeed an event which, in his ardor for the Saxon cause, he could not have anticipated; and even when the disinclination of both was broadly and plainly manifested, he

could scarce bring himself to believe that two Saxons of royal descent should scruple, on personal grounds, at an alliance so necessary for the public weal of the nation. But it was not the less certain. Rowena had always expressed her repugnance to Athelstane, and now Athelstane was no less plain and positive in proclaiming his resolution never to pursue his addresses to the Lady Rowena. Even the natural obstinacy of Cedric sunk beneath these obstacles, where he, remaining on the point of junction, had the task of dragging a reluctant pair up to it, one with each hand. He made, however, a last vigorous attack on Athelstane, and he found that resuscitated sprout of Saxon royalty engaged, like country squires of our own day, in a furious war with the clergy.

It seems, that, after all his deadly menaces against the abbot of St. Edmund's, Athelstane's spirit of revenge — what between the natural indolent kindness of his own disposition, what through the prayers of his mother Edith, attached, like most ladies (of the period), to the clerical order — had terminated in his keeping the abbot and his monks in the dungeons of Coningsburgh for three days on a meager diet. For this atrocity the abbot menaced him with excommunication, and made out a dreadful list of complaints in the bowels and stomach, suffered by himself and his monks, in consequence of the tyrannical and unjust imprisonment they had sustained. With this controversy, and with the means he had adopted to counteract this clerical persecution, Cedric found the mind of his friend Athelstane so fully occupied that it had no room for another idea; and, when Rowena's name was mentioned, the noble Athelstane prayed leave to quaff a full goblet to her health, and that she might soon be the bride of his kinsman Wilfred. It was a desperate case, therefore. There was obviously no more to be made of Athelstane; or, as Wamba expressed it, in a phrase which has descended from Saxon times to ours, he was a cock that would not fight.

There remained, betwixt Cedric and the determination which the lovers desired to come to, only two obstacles, — his own ob-

stinacy, and his dislike of the Norman dynasty. The former feeling gradually gave way before the endearments of his ward, and the pride which he could not help nourishing in the fame of his son. Besides, he was not insensible to the honor of allying his own line to that of Alfred, when the superior claims of the descendant of Edward the Confessor were abandoned forever. Cedric's aversion to the Norman race of kings was also much undermined, first, by consideration of the impossibility of ridding England of the new dynasty, — a feeling which goes far to create loyalty in the subject to the king *de facto;* and, secondly, by the personal attention of King Richard, who delighted in the blunt humor of Cedric, and so dealt with the noble Saxon, that, ere he had been a guest at court for seven days, he had given his consent to the marriage of his ward Rowena and his son Wilfred of Ivanhoe.

The nuptials of our hero, thus formally approved by his father, were celebrated in the most august of temples, the noble minster[1] of York. The King himself attended, and, from the countenance which he afforded on this and other occasions to the distressed and hitherto degraded Saxons, gave them a safer and more certain prospect of attaining their just rights than they could reasonably hope from the precarious chance of a civil war. The Church gave her full solemnities, graced with all the splendor which she of Rome knows how to apply with such brilliant effect.

Gurth, gallantly appareled, attended as esquire upon his young master whom he had served so faithfully, and the magnanimous Wamba, decorated with a new cap and a most gorgeous set of silver bells. Sharers of Wilfred's dangers and adversity, they remained, as they had a right to expect, the partakers of his more prosperous career.

But besides this domestic retinue, these distinguished nuptials were celebrated by the attendance of the high-born Normans, as well as Saxons, joined with the universal jubilee of the lower orders, that marked the marriage of two individuals as a pledge

[1] The famous York Cathedral.

of the future peace and harmony betwixt two races, which, since that period, have been so completely mingled that the distinction has become wholly invisible. Cedric lived to see this union approximate towards its completion; for as the two nations mixed in society, and formed intermarriages with each other, the Normans abated their scorn, and the Saxons were refined from their rusticity. But it was not until the reign of Edward III. that the mixed language, now termed English, was spoken at the court of London, and that the hostile distinction of Norman and Saxon seems entirely to have disappeared.

It was upon the second morning after this happy bridal that the Lady Rowena was made acquainted by her handmaid, Elgitha, that a damsel desired admission to her presence, and solicited that their parley might be without witness. Rowena wondered, hesitated, became curious, and ended by commanding the damsel to be admitted, and her attendants to withdraw.

She entered, — a noble and commanding figure, the long white veil in which she was shrouded overshadowing rather than concealing the elegance and majesty of her shape. Her demeanor was that of respect, unmingled by the least shade either of fear or of a wish to propitiate favor. Rowena was ever ready to acknowledge the claims and attend to the feelings of others. She arose, and would have conducted her lovely visitor to a seat; but the stranger looked at Elgitha, and again intimated a wish to discourse with the Lady Rowena alone. Elgitha had no sooner retired with unwilling steps, than, to the surprise of the Lady of Ivanhoe, her fair visitant kneeled on one knee, pressed her hands to her forehead, and bending her head to the ground, in spite of Rowena's resistance, kissed the embroidered hem of her tunic.

"What means this, lady?" said the surprised bride; "or why do you offer me a deference so unusual?"

"Because to you, Lady of Ivanhoe," said Rebecca, rising up and resuming the usual quiet dignity of her manner, "I may lawfully, and without rebuke, pay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I am — forgive the boldness which has

offered to you the homage of my country — I am the unhappy Jewess for whom your husband hazarded his life against such fearful odds in the tilt-yard of Templestowe."

"Damsel," said Rowena, "Wilfred of Ivanhoe on that day rendered back but in slight measure your unceasing charity towards him in his wounds and misfortunes. Speak! is there aught remains in which he or I can serve thee?"

"Nothing," said Rebecca calmly, "unless you will transmit to him my grateful farewell."

"You leave England, then?" said Rowena, scarce recovering the surprise of this extraordinary visit.

"I leave it, lady, ere this moon again changes. My father hath a brother high in favor with Mohammed Boabdil, King of Granada. Thither we go, secure of peace and protection, for the payment of such ransom as the Moslem exacts from our people."

"And are you not, then, as well protected in England?" said Rowena. "My husband has favor with the King. The King himself is just and generous."

"Lady," said Rebecca, "I doubt it not; but the people of England are a fierce race, quarreling ever with their neighbors or among themselves. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is a heartless dove; Issachar, an overlabored drudge, which stoops between two burdens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbors, and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during her wanderings."

"But you, maiden," said Rowena — "you surely can have nothing to fear. She who nursed the sick-bed of Ivanhoe," she continued, rising with enthusiasm — "she can have nothing to fear in England, where Saxon and Norman will contend who shall most do her honor."

"Thy speech is fair, lady," said Rebecca, "and thy purpose fairer; but it may not be — there is a gulf betwixt us. Our breeding, our faith, alike forbid either to pass over it. Farewell!

yet, ere I go, indulge me one request. The bridal-veil hangs over thy face: deign to raise it, and let me see the features of which fame speaks so highly."

"They are scarce worthy of being looked upon," said Rowena; "but, expecting the same from my visitant, I remove the veil."

She took it off accordingly; and partly from the consciousness of beauty, partly from bashfulness, she blushed so intensely, that cheek, brow, neck, and bosom were suffused with crimson. Rebecca blushed also, but it was a momentary feeling, and, mastered by higher emotions, passed slowly from her features like the crimson cloud, which changes color when the sun sinks beneath the horizon.

"Lady," she said, "the countenance you have deigned to show me will long dwell in my remembrance. There reigns in it gentleness and goodness; and if a tinge of the world's pride or vanities may mix with an expression so lovely, how should we chide that which is of earth for bearing some color of its original? Long, long will I remember your features, and bless God that I leave my noble deliverer united with"—

She stopped short. Her eyes filled with tears. She hastily wiped them, and answered to the anxious inquiries of Rowena, "I am well, lady — well; but my heart swells when I think of Torquilstone and the lists of Templestowe. Farewell! One the most trifling part of my duty remains undischarged. Accept this casket. Startle not at its contents."

Rowena opened the small silver-chased casket, and perceived a carcanet, or necklace, with ear-jewels of diamonds, which were obviously of immense value.

"It is impossible," she said, tendering back the casket. "I dare not accept a gift of such consequence."

"Yet keep it, lady," returned Rebecca. "You have power, rank, command, influence: we have wealth, the source both of our strength and weakness. The value of these toys, ten times multiplied, would not influence half so much as your slightest

wish. To you, therefore, the gift is of little value; and to me, what I part with is of much less. Let me not think you deem so wretchedly ill of my nation as your commons[1] believe. Think ye that I prize these sparkling fragments of stone above my liberty, or that my father values them in comparison to the honor of his only child? Accept them, lady. To me they are valueless. I will never wear jewels more."

"You are, then, unhappy!" said Rowena, struck with the manner in which Rebecca uttered the last words. "Oh, remain with us! The counsel of holy men will wean you from your erring law, and I will be a sister to you."

"No, lady," answered Rebecca, the same calm melancholy reigning in her soft voice and beautiful features, "that may not be. I may not change the faith of my fathers like a garment unsuited to the climate in which I seek to dwell; and unhappy, lady, I will not be. He, to whom I dedicate my future life, will be my comforter, if I do His will."

"Have you, then, convents, to one of which you mean to retire?" asked Rowena.

"No, lady," said the Jewess; "but among our people, since the time of Abraham downwards, have been women who have devoted their thoughts to Heaven, and their actions to works of kindness to men, tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed. Among these will Rebecca be numbered. Say this to thy lord, should he chance to inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved."

There was an involuntary tremor on Rebecca's voice, and a tenderness of accent, which perhaps betrayed more than she would willingly have expressed. She hastened to bid Rowena adieu.

"Farewell!" she said. "May He who made both Jew and Christian shower down on you His choicest blessings! The bark that wafts us hence will be under weigh ere we can reach the port."

[1] People.

She glided from the apartment, leaving Rowena surprised as if a vision had passed before her. The fair Saxon related the singular conference to her husband, on whose mind it made a deep impression. He lived long and happily with Rowena, for they were attached to each other by the bonds of early affection, and they loved each other the more from the recollection of the obstacles which had impeded their union. Yet it would be inquiring too curiously to ask whether the recollection of Rebecca's beauty and magnanimity did not recur to his mind more frequently than the fair descendant of Alfred might altogether have approved.

Ivanhoe distinguished himself in the service of Richard, and was graced with further marks of the royal favor. He might have risen still higher, but for the premature death[1] of the heroic Cœur-de-Lion before the Castle of Chaluz, near Limoges. With the life of a generous but rash and romantic monarch perished all the projects which his ambition and his generosity had formed; to whom may be applied, with a slight alteration, the lines composed by Johnson for Charles of Sweden: —

> His fate was destined to a foreign strand,
> A petty fortress and an "humble" hand;
> He left the name at which the world grew pale,
> To point a moral, or adorn a TALE.

[1] Richard perished in a petty disagreement with one of his foreign barons, the Viscount of Limoges, about some treasure that had been found on the latter's estate. Richard, while besieging the Viscount's Castle of Chaluz, was wounded by an arrow in his shoulder, from the effects of which he died, April 6, 1199.

GLOSSARY.

ABACUS. The staff of office of the Grand Master of the Knights Templars.

ABBEY. A monastery; a place of religious seclusion.

AGRIFFE. A clasp.

AN. If.

ANCHORET. A religious recluse.

ANON. Again; presently.

AP. Son of.

APPERTAIN. To belong.

ARBLAST. A crossbow of steel.

ARRET. A decree; a decision.

ASCETIC. Rigorous.

ASSAY. To try.

AUGUR. To foretell.

AVOID. Depart.

BALDRIC. A belt worn over the shoulder, sometimes plain, sometimes ornamented.

BANDEAU. A narrow band or fillet; a portion of a head-dress.

BANDITTI. Bandits; outlaws.

BARBICAN. An outwork or out-tower defending the entrance to a castle, usually commanding its approach over a drawbridge.

BARRIERS. Inclosures for tournaments; fortifications outside the outer walls of a castle.

BARTISAN. A small turret so placed at the angle of a tower or parapet, that, protruding and overhanging, it serves for outlook and defense.

BATON. A staff.

BATTLEMENTS. The indented parapet of fortifications.

BEAVER. The face-guard of a helmet, which could be moved up or down.

BEECH-MAST. Beech-nuts.

BEHEST. A command; a request.

BENEDICITE. Bless you.

BESHREW. A word of imprecation.

BESTED. Pressed.

BIDE. To await.

BILL. A kind of pike; a weapon.

BLENCH. To shrink.

BLOOD-GUILTINESS. The crime of blood-shedding.

BONDSMAN. A slave.

BONNET. A cap.

BONNY. Merry; pleasing; pretty.

BOON. Jolly; companionable.

BOUNTY. Favor.

BRAKES. Thick underbrush.

BRAWN. Flesh of a boar or of swine; pork.

BREVIARY. Prayer-book of the Romish Church.

BROTHER. A member of a religious order or body.

BROWN-BILL. A form of bill or halberd.

BUCKRAM. A stiff, coarse fabric.

BURGHERS. Townspeople.

BUTT. 1. A cask. 2. A mark for shooting; a target.

BUXOM. Genial; jolly; healthy; vigorous.

BYZANT. A coin of the East, worth about $75, so called from being coined at Byzantium.

CAITIFF. A knave, in the sense of a low fellow.

CANON. A church regulation.

CASQUE. A helmet.

CASSOCK. A loose outer cloak; a clerical garment resembling a long frock-coat.

CAVALCADE. Persons in procession on horseback.

CERTES. Certainly.

CHAMFRON. Armor to protect the head of a horse.

CHIAN. A Greek wine.

CHIVALRY. The system of knighthood.

CHURL. 1. A man who held land from his lord, or worked on his estate; one of the lowest class of freemen. 2. A rough, surly fellow.

CISTERCIAN. A monk of the rigorous branch of the Benedictine order at Citeaux, France.

CLERK. A monk; a friar; a priest.

COMPOUND. To bargain.

CONGEE. A courtesy.

COPE. An ecclesiastical vestment very much like a cloak.

CORSELET. Armor (breast-plate and backpiece) for the body.

COURSER. A swift horse of war.

CRAVE. To require.

CRAVEN. A coward.

CREST. 1. The plume or decoration on the top of a helmet. 2. The device over a coat of arms.

CROWDER. A player of a crowd or fiddle; a fiddler.

CRYPT. Generally a vault beneath a church, either for purposes of burial or as an underground chapel or oratory.

CURFEW. A bell rung at nightfall to cover the fires and extinguish the lights.

CURTAL FRIAR. A friar who acted as gate-keeper of a monastery.

DAIS. A raised platform.

DEMIVOLT. A movement by a horse in which it makes a half turn, the forelegs raised.

DINGLE. A dale; a vale.

DOFF. Literally to do off; to remove; to take off.

DOLE. Alms; gifts.

DONJON. In ancient castles, the chief tower; also called the keep.

DOTARD. An old man, especially one enfeebled in mind by old age.

DOTING. Weak-minded.

DOUGHTY. Valiant; powerful.

DRAWBRIDGE. A bridge (at the entrance of a castle over the moat or ditch) that could be raised or lowered at will by chains, thereby giving or denying access to the castle.

EMBRASURE. An opening in a parapet.

EN CROUPE. Behind the rider.

EPICUREAN. Loving pleasure.

EQUERRY. An officer in the household of a prince or noble, having care of the horses.

ESCUTCHEON. A shield with coat of arms.

ESPLANADE. A clear space.

ESQUIRE. See *Squire*.

FALCHION. A broad sword having a slightly curved point.

FATHER. A term used in respectful address.

FLAGON. A good-sized drinking-vessel.

FLOURISH. A kind of call upon trumpets.

FOND. Foolish.

FOOT-CLOTH. A caparison for a horse; a large cloth covering reaching to the feet.

FOREFEND. To forbid.

FRANKLIN. An English freeholder.

FRIAR. A monk or priest.

FROCK. Dress of a priest or monk.

FURNITURE. Trappings for a horse.

GAGE. A wager.

GAGE. To pledge.

GALLANT. Daring.

GALLEY. A seagoing boat driven by sails and oars.

GAMMON. Thigh of a hog; a ham.

GAMUT. A musical scale.

GAUD. An ornament; a trinket.

GHOSTLY. Spiritual.

GIBE. A biting jest; a jest carrying sarcasm with it.

GLADE. An open grassy place in a forest.

GORGET. Armor for protecting the throat.

GRACE-CUP. A cup from which wine is drunk after grace has been said.

GRAY-GOOSE SHAFT. An arrow.

GREAT COUNCIL. The Witenagemot.

GUERDON. A reward; a recompense.

GUILD. A society of men of the same class, banded together for mutual protection and aid.

GYMMAL RINGS. Rings interlocked, forming a kind of double ring.

GYVES. Fetters.

HALBERD. A kind of pole-ax; a long shaft or pole mounted with armed steel, pointed, and with a cutting crosspiece.

HALFLING. Half a penny.

HALIDOM. A sacred relic; anything sacred upon which oaths were sworn.

HARNESS. An entire outfit of armor for horse and man.

HAUBERK. A tunic of ringed mail; a coat of mail, especially the long coat of mail.

HEDGE-PRIEST. A poor, mean priest.

HERALD. An officer in charge of royal ceremonies, who looked after the regulations, etc., in tournaments.

HIDE. A land measure, variously estimated at 80, 100, and 120 acres.

HIE. To hasten; to go.

HIND. The female of the deer.

HOLY SEPULCHER. The tomb of Christ.

HOMILY. A sermon.

HOURI. A Mohammedan name for a nymph of Paradise.

HOUSINGS. Trappings.

HUR'S. He is; his.

HUTCH. A chest or bin.

JENNET. A breed of small Spanish horses.

JERKIN. A close-fitting jacket.

JOUST. To take part in a tournament.

KEEP. The chief tower or stronghold of a castle.

KEEPER. An officer whose duty was to look after a hunting-ground.

KIRK. A church.

KIRTLE. A gown; a mantle.

KNAVE. Originally a boy, a menial; later, a tricky fellow, a cheat, a rogue.

KNIGHT. A young man admitted with certain ceremonies to military rank.

KNIGHT-ERRANT. A knight roving about to seek adventure.

LAIRD. A lord.

LAISSEZ ALLER. Let go! Go!

LANCE. A long shaft or spear carried by horsemen.

LARGESS. A gift; a bounty.

LAY BROTHER. A person in a convent under certain conditions, but not in holy orders.

LIEGE. A faithful retainer; a tenant bound by certain ties; a sovereign.

LINEAGE. Descent.

LISTS. In tournaments, the barriers inclosing the field of combat.

LURCHER. A mongrel breed of dogs; a cross between a sheep dog, greyhound, and spaniel.

MACE. A kind of war-club, usually spiked.

MAD. Merry.

MAIL. Armor.

MAJOR-DOMO. A steward.

MANCIPLE. A steward.

MANCUS. A silver or gold coin worth from about a shilling to seven shillings sixpence.

MANGONEL. A machine used to throw stones.

MARK. A coin worth about $3.30.

MARRY. Indeed.

MARSHAL. An officer who regulated the contests in a tournament.

MATIN. A morning prayer; morning service.

MAUGER. In spite of.

MEED. Merit; recompense; reward.

MEN-AT-ARMS. Soldiers completely equipped and heavily armed.

MERCENARY. A soldier who served for hire.

MINION. 1. A person held in favor or esteem. 2. A servile follower.

MITER. A headpiece worn by high-church dignitaries.

MOAT. A trench surrounding the ramparts of a castle. It was generally filled with water.

MONASTERY. An abode of seclusion, especially that for monks.

MORRION. A helmet without visor or beaver.

MORTIFY. To destroy.

MOT. A blast upon a horn or bugle.

MOTLEY. The dress of jesters.

MURRAIN. A cattle disease of an infectious and fatal nature.

MUSSULMAN. A Mohammedan.

NECROMANCY. The fortelling of the future by communication with the dead; sorcery.

NEOPHYTE. A novice.

NOOK. A piece.

ORISON. A prayer.

OUR LADY. The Virgin Mary.

PALESTINE. The Holy Land.

PALFREY. An easy-going horse, especially a small horse for ladies.

PALISADE. A fence of stakes set firmly in the ground.

PALMER. A pilgrim.

PANOPLY. Full armor.

PARAPET. A protecting wall about breast-high.

PARRY. To ward off.

PARTISAN. A staff capped by a blade

with side projections; a long-handled cutting weapon.

PASSAGE OF ARMS. A feat of arms.

PASTY. A sort of meat-pie.

PAYNIM. A pagan; an infidel.

PENANCE. The performance of expiatory penalties.

PENNON. A small banner or flag of a swallow-tail form.

PILGRIM. A wanderer visiting some holy place or shrine as a devotee.

PINNACLE. A turret rising above the main building.

PLATE. An armor of steel plates.

PONIARD. A dagger.

POSTERN. A gate or door, especially a back-door communicating with some private passageway.

PRATING. Talking idly or foolishly.

PRECEPTORY. A religious establishment of the Knights Templars.

PRECINCTS. Bounds; limits.

PRIOR. The superior in charge of a priory.

PRIORY. A house of religion presided over by a prior.

QUARTER-STAFF. A weapon consisting of a tough, thick stick, in size about the height of a man. It was held by the center.

QUEST. A search.

QUOTH. Said.

RABBI. 1. A title of respect among the Jews for an expounder of their law. 2. A lord or master.

RANGER. An officer appointed to look after the royal forests, and see that no depredations were committed.

RASCAILLE. Vulgar; common.

RECK. To care.

RECREANT. A coward; a craven.

REFECTORY. The dining-room of a monastery.

RENDEZVOUS. The meeting-place of appointment.

ROOD. 1. A cross. 2. A rod.

ROSARY. A string of beads used in prayer.

ROUNDELAY. A song.

ROWELS. The small sharp-pointed wheels of spurs.

RUNAGATE. A renegade; a deserting fugitive; a worthless vagabond.

RUSSET. Red.

RUSSET. A coarse cloth; home-spun.

SABER. A heavy broad-bladed sword used by cavalry.

SACRISTAN. A sexton.

SARACEN. A Mohammedan.

SATELLITE. A servant.

SATHANAS. Satan.

SCRIP. A small wallet; a bag.

SCROLL. A writing.

SENDAL. A fine cloth; a kind of silk.

SENESCHAL. The chief domestic officer in the household of a dignitary; a steward.

SETTLE. A bench or seat.

SEWER. The head officer in a household, who had the care of the table service; a steward.

SHAVELING. A term of derision referring to the tonsure of a monk; hence a monk.

SHEKEL. A Jewish coin varying in value from 60 cents (silver) to about $5 (gold).

SHIRE. A county.

SIGNET. A seal.

SILVAN. Of the woods.

SIR. A term of address, often used

when the name of the person addressed is not known; also a title of respect, and again an expression of ironical contempt.

SIRRAH. A contemptuous (and sometimes jocular) expression for "fellow" or "sir."

SLOWHOUND. A sleuth-hound.

SOUBRIQUET. A nickname.

SOUL-SCAT. A kind of funeral duty paid the Church for a requiem for the soul.

SPED. Undone; made an end of.

SQUIRE. An attendant upon a knight.

STANDARD. A banner.

STEWARD. A man who has charge of the domestic affairs of a house.

STOCK-FISH. Cod-fish dried hard, and unsalted.

STOUP. A flagon.

SUMPTER MULE. A pack-mule.

TALE. An aggregate sum, weight, or measure.

TAPESTRY. A fabric richly worked with designs, pictorial or otherwise, generally used as a hanging to cover walls of rooms.

TARGE. A shield; a buckler.

TELL. To count, number, or pay.

THANE. A military tenant and freeholder in the sovereign's service.

THRALL. A bondman; a slave.

TILT-YARD. An inclosure where tournaments were held.

TITHE. The part apportioned to the Church.

TOURNEY. A tournament.

TRENCHER. A wooden vessel, a plate or platter, used for the table.

TRIVET. A table having three legs.

TROTH. Truth; verity.

TROUBADOUR. A minstrel.

TROW. To think; to believe.

TRUNCHEON. A baton; a short staff.

TRYSTING-PLACE. A place of meeting by appointment.

TURBAN. A head-dress, especially of an Eastern or Oriental character.

UNABSOLVED. Unforgiven.

UNCLE. A familiar term of address frequently used by fools or jesters in speaking to their masters.

UNSHRIVEN. Unconfessed.

VIGIL. A watch; a waking.

WARD. 1. One under guardianship. 2. The day guard, as watch was the night guard.

WARDER. 1. A truncheon of office or authority. 2. A watchman; a gate-keeper.

WASSAIL. (Anglo-Saxon, *wesan*, to be; and *hael*, health.) A term used by the Saxons in pledging health.

WEAL. Welfare.

WEEN. To think; to imagine.

WHITTLE. A knife.

WICKET. A small gate.

WONT. Accustomed.

WOT. To know.

YEOMAN. 1. A retainer; a body-guard. 2. A freeholder; a small land-owner.

ZECCHIN. A gold coin of Venice, worth about $2.25.

AN OUTLINE FOR THE STUDY

OF

IVANHOE

BY

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Milwaukee, Wis.

The student should read the novel through for the sake of the story before beginning the study here outlined.

The value of historical fiction lies in the fact that it makes history real, for it reveals the life and spirit of the times portrayed. Properly read it helps the student to visualize — to see history. In reading, the aim should be to get a clear idea of the various things which go to make up the life of a people — the descriptions of the environment, the characters as types, appearance and dress of the people, food, homes and surroundings, amusements, occupations, religion, education, literature, and language.

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I.—Period of History Covered by the Story.

Only such events are considered as have direct bearing on the manners and customs. The time is that of the reign of Richard the Lion-hearted, when the results of the Norman conquest are felt and the fusion of the two races is going on. The numbers following the indented topics refer to pages and are suggestive rather than exhaustive.

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- Jester, Wamba.
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